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LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

BOOKS BY C. C. CRAWFORD

1. **THE TECHNIQUE OF STUDY.** Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1928. Cloth, 353 pages, \$2.00.

A text for how-to-study courses in high school and college. This is a completely revised and rewritten edition of a text trusted with methods of studying particular subjects in college, treating the general problems of study as contained in "*Methods of Study*," which was published by the author in 1926.

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5. **LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE.** By C. C. Crawford and Edna M. Leitzell. Published by C. C. Crawford, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1930. Imitation leather, 242 pages, \$2.00.

A guide for students of ancient and modern languages in high school and college. Treats methods for making language study purposeful and effective.

6. **STATISTICS FOR TEACHERS.** By E. W. Tieggs and C. C. Crawford. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1930. In press.

An elementary textbook in statistical methods. Aims at the development of statistical insight or understanding, and ability to compute the statistical measures most commonly employed in educational work.

LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

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WITH INTRODUCTION BY

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PUBLISHED BY

C. C. CRAWFORD

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

INTRODUCTION

BY

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It has been frequently stated that both too many and too few students are studying foreign languages in our high schools and colleges. Too many take up the study of foreign language merely to satisfy technical requirements or to attain what is believed to be a mark of culture. Too few approach the study with real purpose and gain real satisfaction. If a change is to be brought about in the situation, it will have to be through an intensive study of the problem by those interested in the foreign languages. It will also be necessary to enlist the cooperation of students in coming to a common understanding of the purposes and satisfactions which may be gained from the study of a foreign language.

Two of the most intensive as well as extensive investigations of foreign language study are those carried on by the American and Canadian

Committees on Modern Languages, and by the Advisory Committee of the American Classical League. The other professional literature on foreign language instruction is quite extensive and varied. The greater portion of it, however, deals with the problems of the teacher rather than with those of the student. To date no comprehensive book has been prepared designed to stimulate and guide students in their own study of the problem. Dr. Crawford and Miss Leitzell, in approaching their work from this point of view, have made a definite contribution to the solution of the problems of foreign language study and teaching. They have prepared a book primarily for students, but one that will also be helpful to teachers. The situation is viewed from the standpoint of the learner rather than that of the teacher, not with the idea of relieving the teacher of his responsibility, but, rather, as an aid in giving more purpose to foreign language study. This recognition of the place of the student in the learning situation is in harmony with the general social and educational trends of the day.

The idea of addressing a book to the foreign language student instead of to the teacher is

not entirely new. The need for such a contribution has been recognized for some time. In 1916 Thomas P. Cummings wrote and published a book of one hundred pages on *How to Learn a Language*, on the basis of his experience in training missionaries in African dialects. In 1925 Peter Hagboldt's two pamphlets, *How to Study Modern Languages in High School*, and *How to Study Modern Languages in College*, were published by the University of Chicago Press. Other volumes bearing titles including the word "study" have appeared, but have dealt more extensively with the teacher's problems in teaching the languages than with the student's problems in his study of them. As stated above, the writers have presented their suggestions primarily from the standpoint of the learner, and have discussed his problems in considerable detail.

The authors have shown good judgment in giving the student a great number of suggestions from which he is to select and use those which will be most helpful in the realization of his special purposes in the study of a foreign language. They have indicated under what conditions and with what purposes one method may

be used more effectively than another. It may be pointed out to both students and teachers that no one method is to be used to the exclusion of other methods, but that procedures are to be determined with reference to the existing conditions and the ends to be attained.

While Dr. Crawford, as a Professor of Education, is now engaged in an intensive study of learning and teaching procedures, he has had experience in teaching the ancient and modern languages in high school and college. Miss Leitzell's contribution is an outgrowth of a thorough study of language teaching problems carried on in connection with the writing of her master's thesis here at the University of Southern California, and is also a product of her own experience in the teaching of modern languages. This book is, therefore, an outgrowth of practical experience interpreted in terms of modern educational principles.

PREFACE

If students sometimes rate foreign languages among their most difficult subjects, this fact may in large part be attributed to the methods by which they study. Techniques for foreign language study are not the same as for the study of other subjects. Much of the material in books on how to study has been of little service to students of the languages on this account. It is to meet this special need that the authors have prepared this volume, in which study procedures for ancient and modern languages are treated in detail.

The foreign languages resemble mathematics in that the effects of failure are cumulative. Failure to master one lesson may make impossible effective work on later units. A poor start may spoil the whole year's work. An inappropriate method may cause a student to get so far behind his class in a short time that, even by great effort and good technique, he cannot catch up and win success.

The methods by which the languages should be studied depend upon the aims or results sought. If speaking ability is the aim, the method

will be quite different from that which would be employed for purposes of enriching English vocabulary. The direct method serves quite different purposes from the grammar-translation method. This book describes procedures of opposite types, each to achieve its peculiar ends. The following of one policy will naturally exclude the use of methods appropriate to the opposite policy. The effort has not been to tell *the way* to study languages, but rather *some ways* which will get good results when appropriately selected. The methods are given, and are accompanied by information as to when each should and should not be used.

Even though the book has been prepared mainly for students, it will be of considerable service to teachers. It is easier for teachers to re-state and apply principles that are given in student terms than it is for students to get help and guidance from books addressed to teachers. The writers believe, therefore, that the book will be used as a text in teacher-training institutions in courses for foreign language teachers.

The use of the volume by students may include the following situations: (1) Foreign language courses may be begun by a period of a

few weeks devoted to how to study. (2) The how-to-study instruction may be carried along with the regular language course, with lessons on particular study problems given at the time those problems become serious. (3) Students who have more than average difficulty with particular aspects of their study may be directed to read the chapters or pages that will apply to them. (4) Students in regular how-to-study courses may spend a part of their time in studying this book, along with more general volumes such as *The Technique of Study* and *Studying the Major Subjects*.

The writers are indebted to many persons for special courtesies shown in the preparation of this work. Outstanding are the following: (1) Dr. E. P. Cubberley, Dean of the School of Education, Stanford University, for his encouragement in writing the book, and for helpful criticisms and improvements of the completed manuscript; (2) Mr. George W. H. Shield, Head of the Division of Modern Languages, Los Angeles City Schools, for his critical reactions to a number of points discussed; (3) Dr. Lester B. Rogers, Dean of the School of Education, University of Southern California, for his encouragement and

help in getting the book ready for publication; (4) Mr. Ivan Benson, Assistant Professor of Journalism, University of Southern California, for his critical reading and improvement of the manuscript; (5) the many students and teachers of the foreign languages who so generously contributed their time in personal interviews to report helpful procedures and devices for making foreign language study effective.

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CHAPTER I

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

The way to study a foreign language depends upon the reason or purpose for which it is studied. A particular method cannot be expected to yield equally valuable results in each of several different directions. It is very important that in the very beginning of his language study the student should decide what kind of ability he wishes to acquire regarding the use of the language, and that he should choose his methods of study wisely to achieve the desired outcomes. The present chapter describes a few of the more common aims and purposes which motivate language study. It is not our purpose here to indicate which of these is good and which is not good, because that is a question which must be answered in relation to the life and particular situation of the individual student. We shall, however, note in connection with each of these aims the general type of method which seems most appropriate as a means of achieving it.

The improvement of English. The student who wishes to make his foreign language study contribute the maximum to his knowledge of English should give grammar and translation a prominent place in his method of study. By emphasizing the foreign grammar he will acquire a more perfect mastery of English grammar and a deeper insight into the niceties of structure in his mother tongue. By translating he will emphasize the relationships between foreign and English words, and will thus add to the size, richness, and precision of his English vocabulary. Furthermore, he should choose for study those languages which have vocabularies most closely related to English and which are highly inflected. Thus, the Latin language has been the source from which a large majority of English words have been derived and has greater possibilities than the modern languages for increasing English vocabulary. Also, Latin is a highly inflected language. That is, it has an abundance of different forms and endings for words to correspond to their different grammatical uses, and for this reason it gives an opportunity for the more thorough learning of the grammatical distinctions upon which these

changes of endings rest. It would seem, therefore, that the student whose principal aim is improvement of English should study Latin instead of modern languages, and that whatever language he studies should be attacked largely from the grammar and translation angles.

Appreciation of the people of the foreign country. Many students wish to study a foreign language in order that they may become better acquainted with the people who speak it, and may acquire a deeper and more sincere appreciation of the national aspirations, viewpoints, and customs of the foreign people. It is felt that a knowledge of the foreign language is a step toward a better acquaintance with the people themselves, and that it is a means of promoting closer international friendships and world brotherhood. The method of study which would seem to be most important as a means of achieving this outcome would be abundant and extensive reading of literature which reveals the life and customs of the foreign country. It would seem that grammar study and translation would have less to offer in achieving this aim than would free and spontaneous reading of a recreational or leisure type. The main essential would seem

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to be an abundance of contact and experience with the foreign people, gained in as easy and pleasant a way as possible, and free from the uninteresting drudgery of parsing and formal grammar study. Along with the reading of foreign language might well go considerable reading of foreign literature in English translation, and also the study of the history and geography of the foreign land by means of ordinary English textbooks and collateral readings. This may be particularly necessary in the beginning while the student's knowledge of the foreign language is meager, but as he progresses further in his mastery of the language and acquires the ability to read rapidly and with ease, he will be able to do more and more of his reading in the foreign language itself.

Preparation for travel. The student whose motive for studying the foreign language is to prepare for a European trip, or to spend a few months in a foreign country, should give his first thought to making a decision as to which language to study, and should then consider carefully how he is to study it. If he expects to travel in a particular country, he will, of course, study the language that is spoken in that coun-

try. If, however, his travel is to be in many lands, where many different languages are spoken, he obviously cannot study them all, and must, therefore, give his attention to the mastering of those languages which are more nearly international in nature. These are French, Spanish and English. Even if the travel is to be altogether in countries where these are not the native tongues, a mastery of the three will usually prove fairly effective as a means of getting around, because these three languages are studied and spoken by a fairly large number of persons in every country.

A word should be said, also, about the importance of acquiring travel information, in addition to mere linguistic ability, as a preparation for foreign travel. The student who expects to travel in Spain should combine with his language study a study of the principal cities and their points of interest, as well as the other major national wonders, historical relics of previous centuries, etc. He should become acquainted with the customs of the people as regards modes of travel, attitudes toward foreigners, money systems, etc. Anyone who goes to a foreign country equipped with this kind of information, in addi-

tion to a command of the language, will be able to see more and learn more.

It should be said, further, that the travel aim should result in considerable emphasis upon the use of the direct method as the major study technique, because the use which is made of the language in a foreign tour is one which calls for ability to think and speak freely in the language rather than to translate or to do grammatical exercises.

Business and commercial use of the language.

America's expanding world trade and her rise to the position of the leading financial country in the world have led to an increased emphasis upon foreign languages as a means of promoting commercial enterprises. There is a certain amount of need for commercial representatives in foreign countries, and also for clerks and agents at home who can use the foreign language in handling correspondence and directing negotiations in connection with imports and exports. The methods of studying the language which would seem to be most important as means of qualifying for such pursuits are as follows:

- (1) The direct method should certainly be

preferred to the grammar-translation method for this purpose.

(2) The vocabulary that is acquired and the reading matter that is used should be those of business and practical affairs, rather than of the literary classics, because it is entirely possible to go through a literary type of language study and never make a practical acquaintance with the special vocabulary of commerce and industry. Furthermore, the vocabulary of foreign trade related to dry goods and textiles might be entirely different from that required of a foreign representative of any one of the great companies that export machinery.

(3) The student who expects to engage in foreign trade activities must learn the foreign people even more thoroughly than he learns the language. He must not only be able to talk to them, but also to know their attitudes, interests, and life habits so thoroughly that he can present his sales-talk or other messages convincingly and diplomatically. A common complaint which is made against the applicant for a foreign trade position who has secured all his training in one of our schools is that he knows too little about the foreign country and its people to be able to

compete, for even a minor clerical position, against an applicant who has lived several years in the foreign country.

Consular, diplomatic, and other governmental services abroad. What was said in the previous paragraph about the importance of learning to understand the foreign people as a preparation for foreign trade applies with equal force to the preparation for governmental service abroad. In addition to this there is considerable need for getting an intimate acquaintance with a large body of more specialized information concerning the traditions, customs, conventions, institutions, and governmental organization of the foreign people. Of course, much of this will be classed with the technical training of the governmental official, and cannot be considered as a major function of the foreign language course, but there is much that can and should be done during the period of foreign language preparation to lay a foundation for this phase of the study.

Teaching. Foreign language teaching is probably one of the most common direct vocational usages of languages, on the part of students who have completed language courses. The student who expects to enter this work probably will

have more need for an all-round mastery of the language than will be required in connection with most of the other aims that have been mentioned. Even though he may expect to use a direct method in his teaching, he must be a master of grammar and translation in order to meet the difficulties which his students will face. He must also be well acquainted with the foreign country, and, if possible, he should arrange to spend some time abroad so that he can add vividness and interest to the study of foreign institutions and customs. Since he will have students in his classes whose aims are widely different, he must be a master of the language in each of several lines, and thus be able to give each type of student the kind of guidance and teaching which his particular aims and purposes require.

Furthermore, anyone who expects to teach a given language probably should learn other foreign languages besides that one. The old adage, "He knows no language who knows but one," would seem to have especial application in the case of a teacher either of English or of other languages. It would be well for the prospective teacher to learn at least one other language besides the one he is going to teach. The prospec-

tive teacher of a Romance language might well consider the study of Latin in addition to his French, Spanish, or Italian, and the prospective teacher of a Germanic language should consider the merits of Old English for a similar purpose.

The prospective teacher of any foreign language, furthermore, should consider carefully the question of supply and demand of teachers in that subject. For example, the World War threw large numbers of teachers of German out of employment and created an increased demand for teachers of French and Spanish. Post-war readjustments are being made, and new factors which arise in the international situation may further influence the shifting demands for teachers of different languages. Therefore, the student should secure as adequate information as possible about the demand for teachers of a particular language before investing several years of his time in preparation for teaching it.

Scientific research. For many years it has been customary to require a reading knowledge of two modern languages, usually French and German, in connection with admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. This has been due to the fact that research workers ordinarily are interested in

highly specialized fields, and must have access to published scientific data which have been secured by specialists who have done research along similar lines in foreign countries. The methods which seem to be most appropriate as a preparation for using language in scientific research are reading and translation. There is little or no demand for speaking ability in this connection, and little or no need for ability to convert English into the foreign language. Fluent reading, a large specialized technical vocabulary, and sufficient mastery of the technical phases of grammar for use in solving the meaning of difficult sentences, seem to be the major requirements. As a general rule, the examination for reading ability which is required of Ph.D. candidates takes into account chiefly or solely the ability to translate. Students who have prepared for this examination report that it is very important to practice upon materials closely related to their own special fields of research, rather than upon general literature, or at least in addition to general literature, because unless some work is done in the specialized subject the language will not function readily.

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QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What do you consider the main values of foreign language study to be?
2. Prepare a list of points for use in a debate on one side of the subject: Resolved, that every student should be required to study foreign languages.
3. What languages would be most suitable to study in order to improve English? Arrange them in their order of usefulness and justify your ranking.
4. Outline suggestions for getting a good acquaintance with the manners, customs, and civilization of a foreign country.
5. What suggestions would you offer a person who expected to travel in a foreign country?
6. List as many specific types of commercial use of a foreign language as you can, and after each specify the kind of preparation required.
7. Where and how do governmental servants abroad get their training?
8. How would you prepare for teaching a foreign language?
9. To what extent would the method of studying a foreign language in school be influenced by the fact that languages are required of candidates for the Ph.D. degree?

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CHAPTER II

THINKING IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The most important single principle that should influence the method of studying a foreign language is that underlying the direct method. By the direct method is meant the learning of the foreign language by making a direct association in the mind between the foreign word and the idea it represents, without resorting to an English word as a link between them. This is the way we learn English during childhood, because we have no previous language upon which to rely and we are forced to make the direct type of association. The fact that we already have a command of English when we begin the study of a foreign language offers a strong temptation to employ an indirect or translation method instead of the direct method.

The direct method is preferable because in the long run it saves time. At first it appears to be slower and more difficult than the indirect method, just as the touch system of typewriting seems to be less productive than the "hunt-and-

peck" method. But this first impression is deceiving because after a very short time the indirect method ceases to permit very much progress, while the direct method becomes easier and easier the further it is carried.

Furthermore, the direct method results in a greater amount of ultimate efficiency in the use of the language. If the language is to be used as a tool for communication it must by all means be learned so that the thinking can be done in the language rather than done in English and translated into the language. The objective of improving English through the study of a foreign language is about the only one which tends to justify the use of the indirect method. If the purpose is to learn the language, and not merely to study about the language, an effort should be made to learn it so that it is possible to think in the language.

This chapter is devoted to methods of learning the language so that it will be possible to achieve ability to think in it without resorting to English.

Direct method not to be confused with "natural" method. We sometimes hear the statement that a foreign language should be learned in

exactly the same way as English is learned, mingling with people who speak the language and simply picking it up incidentally from them. This is a very poor procedure because it lacks the element of purposefulness and orderliness. It is true that a person who for some reason finds himself in a foreign country often learns the language more rapidly than students learn it in our schools, but if we consider the fact that he is studying the language all day, and if we also consider the higher degree of motivation which he has, we find that his progress is due not so much to the procedure as to the general situation.

Another example of the "natural" method is that by which classes attempt to learn how to think in the foreign tongue by engaging in random and unorganized classroom conversation. Students sometimes feel that they are thereby really learning the language. It has been found, however, that a definite set of lessons, selected with the problems of the beginner in mind, ordinarily will result in greater progress than these random or hit-and-miss exercises of the natural-method type. In other words, the direct method

is not an aimless or haphazard one; it involves order, plan, and system.

The use of objects as avenues to meanings.

A basic element in the direct method is that of learning words in connection with objects to which they refer. Thus, the word for table, blackboard, student, or teacher, will be learned by having those objects pointed out at the same time as the words are pronounced. Usually, the teacher will assume responsibility for pointing out and naming the objects, but there is much the student can do in the way of employing this procedure in his own study, even though the teacher is using a different method. A student may simply ask his teacher, an advanced student, or a native of the foreign country the name of this, that, or the other object which he wishes to learn. Simply to go around inquiring "What is this?" will yield a large number of foreign words directly associated with the objects, and will go far toward developing the ability to think in the foreign tongue. This is better than asking "What is the word for book?" "What is the word for pencil?", etc., because it makes it possible to keep English out of the mind entirely during the learning.

The use of pictures. Frequently it is very difficult to have readily at hand the objects which are needed to illustrate foreign words, in which case pictures are quite helpful. Many of the direct-method textbooks contain large numbers of pictures, so that practically every word can be learned through some kind of association with the visual image. If the student will make the necessary effort he can accumulate a collection of pictures of his own, selected from magazines and similar sources, to illustrate the vocabulary he is learning at school. He can use these collections very profitably for drill purposes by simply picking up one picture after another and naming in the foreign language as many as he can of the objects which are shown in it.

Some students find it profitable to write the foreign names of the objects under and around the edges of the pictures, and to make these pictures and their labels serve the purpose of a dictionary of the language. Frequently it is possible to make little drawings or sketches to represent various foreign words, so that on seeing or hearing these words it is possible to call up in the mind the drawings that illustrate them. Such words as prepositions may at first

thought be difficult to represent by means of pictures and drawings, but in reality they are not so difficult. For example, pictures may represent objects in front of the table, behind the table, under the table, on the table, and so on. Likewise, action verbs may be represented graphically without a great deal of difficulty. For example, the word "to run" may be illustrated by the picture of a boy in running position, and thus may be associated with such sentences as "he runs," "he is running," "he can run," "he ran," etc. Also a similar picture may be used to illustrate a large number of different verbs. For example, the boy who is "running" may be used to illustrate such verbs as "go," "hurry," "escape," "overtake," "play," etc.

Dramatization. Along with the use of objects and pictures, as aids to meaning, should come dramatization, or acting out in the form of movements the meanings of foreign terms. This has two aspects or phases. The first is the teacher's dramatization of terms, such as when she gives the word for "sit" or "stand" in connection with the actions of sitting down and standing up. Much use of dramatization in this way is found in the direct-method classes.

The second phase of dramatization has to do with the student's own dramatization of the word he is learning. If he will actually open the door at the same time as he says, in the foreign language, "I open the door," the action and the meaning become very directly and vividly associated. The law of contiguity in learning is that the two experiences which occur in the mind at the same time tend to be associated one with another. If the student wishes, therefore, to have his words and their meanings definitely and unmistakably connected, his task is simply to arrange the situation so that the two occur together.

The meaning of a word is, in its essence, simply the behavior in which one engages, or the actions which one carries out automatically and unconsciously when the word is presented to the mind. The best way to assure a rich meaning in response to a word is to engage in the appropriate behavior several times while saying or thinking the foreign word, and then to permit these actions to repeat themselves more or less automatically when the word is encountered at later times.

The use of notebooks. There are several ways

in which notebook work can serve a purpose similar to that served by the use of objects, pictures, and actions. Writing the words and sentences is one way of associating them with their proper meanings. For example, words which are difficult to remember may be written down in the foreign language, and then used as the basis for practice in which each word is read and followed by some kind of real or imaginary action, movement, or gesture, to represent it. The notebook may take on many of the characteristics of a picture book if the student is able and willing to draw figures to represent the thoughts expressed in words, sentences, and idioms.

Practical versus literary vocabulary in relation to thinking in the foreign language.

The art of using the foreign tongue as a medium of thought is promoted more if the words which are learned are the simple everyday words of common life, rather than the select literary or poetic type of words. For example, to learn the word "sadness" is more practical than the word "woe," because it will be used more frequently as a tool for thinking and communication.

Learning related words together as families.

The process of thinking in the foreign language

is considerably aided if the words which are learned are grouped according to subject or theme, instead of being scattered at random over the entire dictionary. Thus, the first lesson might well be limited to just those few objects which are clearly visible and conveniently accessible to the classroom. If a dozen words are to be learned the first day, these dozen words should be the names of classroom furniture and objects, rather than the names of flowers, animals, coins, and days of the week. A few lessons devoted to the classroom will make possible a rather successful and fluent use of the language in talking about classroom situations. Later lessons may be devoted to the study of flowers, resulting in ability to think connectedly and speak fluently within that limited range. Succeeding lessons may be devoted to the home, the government, money, cities, days of the week, etc. It is preferable to work at one of these divisions at a time, and to learn enough about each to be able to think connectedly and fluently before switching to something else.

Connected sentences as units of learning.

Thinking in a language takes place on the basis of larger units than the individual word. The

phrase or the sentence is a more natural thought unit than the word. The policy of learning the individual words, and then trying to put them together synthetically into connected sentences, is almost always fatal to learning to think in the language. It is preferable to learn entire sentences as units, instead of learning all the words individually first.

Let us illustrate this point in terms of the child who is learning to read English. The old method was to teach him to recognize all the letters, and then to identify words by means of the letters with which they were spelled. It has been found, however, that a child can recognize the entire word more easily than he can recognize a single letter in it, and it is not at all uncommon for children to learn to read before having mastered their ABC's. Applying this illustration to foreign languages, it simply means that the beginner in the language can learn the sentence "I have a book in my hand" almost as readily as he can learn the single word "have." When he tries to learn the individual words and put them together in connected sentences, he usually finds that there is something wrong with the resulting combinations, and that the sentences

are seldom such as a native would use in speaking the language.

Learning words through their context. A device for learning to think in the language which is closely related to the one just discussed is that of deriving the meanings from the words which go before and after them in the sentence. This device is used very extensively in reading the English language, and every student can testify to having the experience of discovering the significance of some new term simply by its use in the sentence. An example of this, as employed in a foreign language, is recalled by one of the present writers from his experience as a student of German. The story read was *The House That Jack Built*. It began as follows:

“Es war einmal ein Mann. Der Mann war gut. Der Mann hiesz Jacob. Der Mann Jacob hatte ein Haus,”
etc.

The reader will find that he can almost read this without having had any previous study of German, particularly if he gets the idea that the first sentence means “Once upon a time there was a man.” The later sentences repeat enough of the first one so that the new words can be guessed from the sentence as a whole. Such a

plan of procedure does not supply exact meanings at the moment, but later contacts with words in other connections supply additional richness of meaning until eventually the words are as significant as they could possibly become.

Learning new words through foreign language definitions. Some words may be extremely difficult to dramatize or represent visually, and may be interpreted only with great difficulty by means of the reading context. Resort to a dictionary to interpret such words may be necessary. If, however, the usual type of dictionary is used which defines a foreign word by means of the English equivalent, the program of learning to think in the foreign language is frustrated, and the associations with English words are encouraged rather than discouraged. The solution of this difficulty is to have a dictionary which defines foreign words in the foreign language, just as an English dictionary defines English words in the English language. This point is discussed further in the chapter on vocabulary.

Drill versus knowledge and thought, as the key to the direct method in mastering a language. Paradoxical as it may seem, the method which makes for ability to think in the foreign lan-

guage should put only minor emphasis upon thought, problem solving, and the scientific analysis of the language. Learning to think in the language calls for drill, habit formation, or the establishment of automatic associations, rather than the acquisition of a vast supply of information and knowledge about the language. In other words, the direct method is a less intellectual method than the grammar-translation method, or the indirect type of study. Many expressions should be learned blindly and unquestioningly because they are simply used that way, and there is no special intellectual justification for them. For example, a common way of saying "I am in a hurry" in foreign languages is to say "I have haste." There is no scientific justification for this any more than there is for saying "I am in a hurry." The important thing is simply to fix the customary expression in the memory and then practice it until it is automatic. This may on the surface seem less dignified or noble or worthy than a method which stresses profound thought on complex principles of grammar, but it is the method which promotes the practical ability to think in the language.

Oral work as a phase of the direct method.

Studying aloud occupies a very prominent place in the learning of a language by the direct method. A very large portion of the thinking which is done in a foreign tongue is done either in connection with speaking or with hearing the language spoken. Consequently, the preparation for this use of the language should be made by means of oral practice. If a student would learn words and sentences on his tongue, instead of in his mind, he would have considerably less difficulty in getting those words to come into his mind promptly in connection with ordinary conversational situations.

There is, however, a possibility of one type of thinking in the foreign language without the possession of skill in the oral speaking of it. This is found in the case of silent reading. It is possible to develop the ability to read the language silently at the rate of ordinary English reading, and to get the meaning very satisfactorily without being able to pronounce or speak the language orally. In fact, teachers of English reading in the upper grades of the public schools spend a great deal of effort in teaching children to read without calling the words as they see them. It has been found that if vocalization can

be eliminated or reduced, the rate and quality of comprehension can be improved. For this reason, therefore, if the student has only the single aim of developing silent-reading ability in the foreign language, he may very well disregard entirely the oral practice in the language.

Memorization of idioms, proverbs, poems, and paragraphs. A study device which makes use of the principle previously stated, that thinking in the language is to be acquired by a drill type of procedure, is the method of memorizing short or long quotations and memory gems in the foreign tongue. To memorize very thoroughly one hundred of the most common idiomatic expressions of the language makes it possible always to have these particular expressions instantly available "on the tip of the tongue," whenever they are needed. Likewise, the memorization of poems, songs, and extracts from prose literature is simply a method of forming powerful automatic associations for such word combinations as are represented in these selections. Not every word combination involved in the language will be mastered in connection with a few such selections, but a number of typical constructions will be so learned, and these will serve somewhat the

purpose of guides or patterns for the student's own original sentences.

Intensive versus extensive types of study.

The question of how much to scatter and how much to "dig in" when studying for the ability to think in the language is difficult to answer dogmatically. Intensive methods of study are advantageous to a certain extent. It is well to confine the effort to a few words or a few types of sentences until they are pretty well mastered and can be manipulated automatically, during the early stages of foreign language study. This intensive policy yields a feeling of progress or achievement very early in the course, and thus makes it less difficult to continue the study.

The slow-moving and intensive procedure has limitations, however. In the first place, dwelling very long on a few constructions may sacrifice interest. In the second place, intensive and slow-moving methods may allow time in the thought process for associations with English words to creep in, and thus defeat the major purpose of the study. It may be well to go slowly as regards the exposure to new words and new sentence structures, learning only a few each day and

practicing each of these a great deal, but it is well to go rapidly in the sense of uttering a particular sentence at a normal speaking rate, instead of speaking so slowly as to allow time for an English word to come into the mind for each foreign word that is uttered.

There is another phase of this question of intensive methods of study which should be discussed at this time. That is the question of the amount of thoroughness for which to strive in the mastery of a particular language usage. If the standard of 100 per cent perfection is to be insisted upon, the result will be such intensive procedures as to defeat the aim of learning to think in the foreign language. One's first steps in speaking a foreign tongue may be compared to the first steps a baby takes in learning to walk. They are feeble and faltering and far from perfect. If we insist that absolute perfection is to be maintained in everything that is done we shall simply discourage the beginner from striking out on his own resources. He will be so afraid of getting a fall that he will prefer to remain in the baby carriage of translation, instead of getting out and learning to travel under his own power.

Grammar after rather than before speech habits. If the major aim is to acquire the ability to think in the language, and to use it fluently as a medium for the expression of thought, grammar should be kept in the background during the early stages of the course. The attempt to use and apply a large number of grammatical rules, while framing a sentence or expressing a thought, takes so much of the attention away from what is being expressed that very little real thinking can take place. It is preferable to form strong habits of using words and expressions correctly, and later to generalize these habits and raise them to the level of conscious formulation in the mind by deriving the grammatical rules which are illustrated by the usages already learned to the automatic stage.

Furthermore, the study of grammar must be reduced to a somewhat smaller scale than has been common in some foreign language classes in the past, or there will be no time left for the development of the actual skills and habits required for the direct use of the language. The methods of studying foreign languages employed in years past involved so much expenditure of time upon grammar that there was no time to

learn to use the language directly. Furthermore, it is well, in learning the grammatical phases of a language, to learn them in connection with their actual applications, instead of simply learning them abstractly. For example, in learning the forms of the verb, "to have," it is preferable to learn them in connection with such sentences as "I have a book in my hand," "You have a book in your hand," "He has a book in his hand," etc. instead of simply, "I have," "you have," "he has," etc.

The place of translation. From what has already been said in various places in this chapter the reader will realize that when the aim is to develop ability to think in the language, translation should be scrupulously avoided. Every time the student translates from English to the foreign language, or from the foreign language to English, he cultivates associations between foreign words and English words which are diametrically opposed to the ability to think in the foreign language. We may, in fact, summarize the entire chapter by saying that the direct method is primarily one which eliminates translation and the translation state of mind from the study of the foreign languages.

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QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What is meant by the direct method?
2. Prepare a list of arguments to be used in a debate on one side of the subject: Resolved, that modern languages should be learned by the direct method.
3. Explain how the natural method differs from the direct method.
4. What use does the direct method make of pictures and objects? Why?
5. Explain how dramatization aids in getting the meaning of a word.
6. What are the major uses and abuses of notebooks in language instruction?
7. State as many advantages as you can which attach to learning words in groups or families, rather than individually.
8. Why is the connected sentence a desirable unit for learning to think in a language?
9. Explain the meaning of learning from the context.
10. What is the difference between learning meanings from the context and learning from foreign language definitions?
11. Explain the relation between thinking in a language and thinking about the language.
12. How does oral study relate to ability to think in the language?
13. What is the nature of the benefit that comes from memorizing foreign language proverbs and idioms?
14. Would you recommend reading a few pages well, or many pages superficially? Why?

15. What relation does grammar study have to thinking in the foreign language?
16. What is the attitude of the direct method toward translation?

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CHAPTER III

PRONUNCIATION

The ability to pronounce a foreign language may well be thought of under three main heads:

(1) Ability to give the appropriate sounds to the individual letters.

(2) Ability to accent correctly the syllables which make up a word.

(3) Ability to give the proper inflection or intonation to the words within a sentence or paragraph.

The present chapter undertakes to present methods of acquiring these three abilities.

I. LEARNING THE SOUNDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL LETTERS

The simplest element in pronunciation is the individual letter. To learn the sound of each letter in the alphabet is, therefore, a fundamental part of the problem of mastering foreign pronunciation, particularly if the ability to pronounce is to be used in connection with reading. It would be possible, of course, to learn to pronounce

words without knowing anything about their spelling if the only use to be made of the language were in speaking, but this would not be true in case of reading, where visual impressions must be translated into sounds.

The major emphasis in learning the sounds of the letters should be given to the vowel sounds. Many, but by no means all, of the consonants have the same sounds in the foreign language as in English. Very noticeable difference between languages as regards pronunciation are found in the case of the vowel sounds. Most of the procedures suggested in this section have to do with learning the pronunciation of vowels, but the principles apply equally well to such consonants as present difficulty.

Learning the sounds by imitation. To learn the sounds of the letters by hearing someone else pronounce them is good for several reasons, as follows:

- (1) It is a natural or psychological method.
- (2) It supplies a good foundation for the application of rules of pronunciation which may be learned later. For example, in French it is often difficult to pronounce the nasalized sounds when they are studied by themselves, but they are

learned more easily and naturally when they are heard pronounced by others in such a word as *chanson*. After having learned to say the word according to the oral model, it is easier to learn the rule that the two vowels are nasalized. These sounds can then be remembered and correctly pronounced when found in other words by simply referring in the mind to the example, *chanson*. Rules of pronunciation simply fix more firmly the sounds that have been learned in a natural and interesting way through imitation of spoken words.

(3) Imitation is essential in differentiating between closely similar sounds. When the similarity is very close, verbal explanations and written rules fail to distinguish one from the other well enough to serve the purpose.

(4) It is unsafe to rely on rules or on parallels between foreign and English sounds for letters because these are seldom accurate or precise. For example, in a French book the example is given that *é*, closed, is pronounced "almost like *a* in day," when in reality it would be better to say that it does not sound like any English letter at all, and then simply to demonstrate the actual sound by example.

In using the imitation method of learning pronunciation it is important to get a good model to imitate, to listen intently before imitating the sound, to imitate with the person acting as the model present for the giving of corrections and criticisms, and to repeat correctly any mispronounced words after the errors have been pointed out. As a general policy, it is well to arrange the study hour as soon as possible after the class drill so that such oral practice in pronunciation as is engaged in may be carried out while the images of the sounds heard in class are fresh in mind.

The clarity of foreign sounds as contrasted with English pronunciation. One of the great difficulties of English speaking people in learning foreign languages is due to the lax habits of pronunciation commonly used in English. Contrast, for example, the English word "honor" with its Spanish equivalent *honor*, or with such Spanish words as *pastor*, *universal*, *adorable*. As an illustration we may contrast the pronunciation of the English word "see" with that of the Spanish or French *si*. In reality the English "see" involves a glide "see-ey," while the French and Spanish have the single vowel sound *si*. For this reason it is

necessary to exercise considerable care to keep sounds pure, and to eliminate the tendency to relax the speech organs in the middle of a sound.

Learning sounds through English illustrations.

A very common method of acquiring foreign sounds is comparing them with English equivalents. This has its limitations, in that there are some sounds in the foreign language which are totally different from any English sounds which we know. The French nasal sounds are examples of this, as are also the French *u* and the German *ü*. The method is more applicable to Spanish. For example, we may use such a guide as the following for practical purposes, although there are many differences between the English and the foreign sounds compared:

a pronounced approximately as *a* in father
ε pronounced approximately as *a* in late
i pronounced approximately as *ee* in meet
o pronounced approximately as *o* in note
u pronounced approximately as *u* in blue

The use of phonetics. Under the term phonetics we include two ideas. The first is the use of special phonetic symbols to designate sounds. These are similar in nature and purpose to the various types of diacritical marks which have

been used in teaching English pronunciation in elementary schools. Thus, words which are not pronounced as they are spelled may be written in the phonetic transcription, in order that the student will have no doubt of the sounds to be given the various letters. Knowing the value of the phonetic symbols, he can pronounce the word with a considerable degree of accuracy, whether he has ever heard it pronounced before or not. A given phonetic symbol always has the same sound, while a given letter may be pronounced one way one time and another way at another time. Thus, if one had any doubt about the pronunciation of the French word *maintenant* this doubt would be entirely removed on referring to the phonetic transcription, provided that a clear idea had been previously gained concerning the sound of each of these phonetic units in the international phonetic alphabet. The use of the phonetic transcriptions thus makes for independence in acquiring the pronunciation of new words, after the phonetic alphabet has been mastered and the proper sounds associated with each of the symbols.

The second idea involved under the head of phonetics is that of conscious analysis and study

of the vocal organs as a means of learning to make new sounds. For example, in learning to make the French *u*, the phonetic method would involve such directions as "round the lips as if to pronounce English *oo*, as in 'boot,' then place the tongue forward in the mouth as for the English *ee*, as in 'meet'." A thorough-going phonetic method would make much more detailed analysis of the vocal organs than this illustration includes. The phonetic specialists have made various plaster models of the mouth and other vocal organs, and have devised elaborate charts and diagrams showing the positions of all the various organs of speech as they are involved in the different sounds. Thus, we have various vowel triangles and elaborate schemes for making the learner conscious of muscles and speech apparatus which had not previously been subject to voluntary control.

Limitations of the phonetic method. There are some limitations to be considered in connection with the phonetic method:

(1) Some languages are much less in need of the study of phonetics than others, because of their greater similarity to English. Thus, Spanish is ordinarily taught without resort to elabor-

ate phonetic systems because it already has an almost perfect phonetical orthography and has very few sounds that are utterly different from English sounds. Likewise, German sounds are similar to English in many respects, and present less need for phonetics. French, however, offers more difficulty and is more frequently taught by means of phonetics.

(2) Learning the phonetic script is a task of some little difficulty which has no utility in itself, and is purely a means to an end. Some language experts feel that the time and effort required for the initial mastery of the phonetic alphabet would be better spent on actual practice in the correct pronunciation of the foreign words. The writers of this book are inclined to agree with this view as regards Spanish and German, but not completely as regards French.

(3) The wisdom of making a great deal of analysis of the vocal organs and attempting the conscious direction or supervision of their operation during speech, as contrasted with the policy of leaving them to automatic or unconscious behavior, is seriously questioned by some writers on psychological grounds. The psychological principle of giving attention to the result

rather than to the process in acquiring a skill seems to be opposed to the extensive use of phonetics.

The use of rules. In most languages a few rules of pronunciation are distinctly helpful and should be learned. As a general principle, however, it is well to be suspicious of rules, because there are so many phases of foreign language pronunciation that are not amenable to rule. One has simply to think of the erratic spelling of English words to realize how futile would be the effort to acquire its pronunciation solely by the rule method. When the exceptions get numerous the rules become practically useless.

Observing the speech organs in action. A device which is commonly used in foreign language work is that of observing the lips moving as a means of learning to make the sounds. Thus, the teacher may enunciate slowly while the student observes and tries to imitate the movements of the teacher's mouth. Likewise practicing oral pronunciation before the mirror in order to become more keenly conscious of the part played by the tongue, lips, and vocal cords is very common. Placing the fingers on the Adam's apple in order to determine when a sound is voiced and

when it is voiceless is another useful device of this same type.

Studying vowels and consonants in combinations. In languages which have different sounds for a given consonant when it comes before different vowels, the problem of acquiring the mastery of such consonants is sometimes difficult. For example, in Spanish and in French the letter *g* is pronounced differently before *e* and *i* than before *a*, *o*, or *u*. Likewise, other letters manifest equal variations. It has been found profitable by some students in Spanish to practice such exercises as

ca, que, qui, co, cu,
za, ce, ci, zo, zu.
ga, gue, gui, go, gu,
ja, ge, gi, jo, ju.

The main force and value of such exercises is lost unless they are accompanied by the written forms, because the purpose is to associate the correct consonant sound, which remains the same throughout, with the consonant letter, which changes from one vowel to another. If the pronunciation of such troublesome combinations is thoroughly learned, much of the difficulty in-

volved in learning to spell the language will be eliminated.

II. ACCENT

Next to the learning of the sounds of the vowels and consonants comes the mastery of the accent. By accent is meant simply that the strength or throw of the voice should be placed on the proper syllable in the word. Much of what was said in connection with the previous section also is applicable here. For example, learning through imitation by listening carefully to the accent of other speakers and pronouncing words orally after them while they are present to give correction and criticism is as useful for learning accent as it is for learning the sounds of the letters. Other methods and devices will be discussed in the remainder of this section.

Syllabification. Correct syllabification of words is the first step toward correct accent. When facility in dividing words into syllables at the right places has been acquired, the application of the rules for accent is much easier. Much difficulty is encountered by beginning students in learning accent because of their trying to divide words in the same way as English

words are divided. Most beginning textbooks give the rules for syllabification, and it is well to practice applying these rules by writing a few paragraphs with hyphens between the syllables, and then having someone check and correct the exercise. After the exercise has been correctly written in this way it may be read a number of times with a definite attempt to separate the syllables, one from another, very much as if they were distinct words. Listening to someone else read the passage and looking at the words in the book while he reads them also affords good practice in breaking them up into syllables properly.

Learning and deriving rules. A clear-cut statement in regard to where to place the accent frequently removes much of the difficulty. For example, the rule that in French the syllables of the words are pronounced with almost equal stress and with a slight additional force on the last syllable, is of considerable service. Similarly, the accent in Spanish is very well taken care of by three rules, as follow :

(1) All words ending in *n*, *s*, or a vowel are accented on the next to the last syllable.

(2) All words ending in consonants other than *n* or *s* are accented on the last syllable.

(3) Words that are not accented according to these rules bear a written accent.

After a little practice in applying such rules as these to the pronunciation of a number of words by engaging in the necessary oral drill, they come to work almost automatically. Thoughtful observation of a number of words will frequently make it possible to deduce the rules for accent, even though they have not been previously stated in definite form. They are more meaningful if derived in this way than if simply memorized. It is well also to examine critically the words which are not amenable to rule, and which have special written accents, in order to satisfy oneself regarding the reasons for the written accent. The use of rhymes and jingles to remember the rule has been practiced by numerous students, as in the case of the following:

“*N*, *s*, or vowel, next to the last,
All other consonants on the last.”

Another device for remembering the Spanish rule graphically is as follows:

— — — —' — (n, s, or vowel)
 — — — —' — (consonants)

Underlining the accented syllables. A good exercise to test one's knowledge of the rules for accent is to go through a few paragraphs underlining the syllable of each word which should be accented. The paragraph may then be checked and corrected by someone who is thoroughly informed about accent, after which it may be read with an effort to stress the syllables which have been underlined.

Studying accent through contrast. The correct placing of the accent is sometimes aided by practicing the pronunciation of familiar words which have different accents. For example, the Latin infinitive, *amare*, is accented on the second syllable, but the first person singular indicative, *amo*, is accented on the first syllable. The average student tends to learn the pronunciation of *amare* and then to carry over the habit of pronouncing *amo* with the accent on the second syllable like *amare*. A good exercise to eradicate this error is to practice these two words together thus, *amare, amo*. By saying one and then the other in close conjunction, the contrast is brought more forcibly to mind, and the tendency

to accent the last syllable incorrectly is eliminated. Similarly, words which have the written accent in some persons and numbers, and not in others, may be practiced in conjunction with each other, with special attention devoted to the presence or absence of the written accent.

III. INTONATION AND INFLECTION

We come now to the third major phase of pronunciation, the ability to express correctly the sound of the sentence or paragraph, as contrasted with that of the individual letters and syllables in the word. It is entirely possible, and in fact very common, for students to learn the individual sounds and yet not be able to put them together in the sentence in a fluent or natural way, just as the small child in learning to read English may pronounce all the words in such a sentence as "I see the little kitty," and yet pronounce them in a mechanical sing-song, or monotone, utterly different from the sound of conversational speech. The mastery of this phase of pronunciation is extremely important. We call it vocal inflection. It consists basically of variations of pitch to express different shades of meaning. Next to pitch variations, it involves

variations in loudness, rhythm, and tone quality. Correct pronunciation in this larger sense relates to pronunciation of the individual sounds and syllables in very much the same way as the major architectural design of a building relates to the laying of the individual bricks.

Transferring English inflection to foreign sentences. The difficulty of the beginner in a foreign language often lies in his not making an effort to read English with proper inflection. If a student is inclined to read English in a monotone, he will be even more inclined to read the foreign language in a similar manner. In the effort to acquire good inflection in the foreign language it is well to say the English sentence in just as natural and conversational a voice as possible in order to set a pattern, and then to express the same idea in foreign words, trying to maintain the same general inflection of the sentence as a whole.

Likewise, it is possible to practice saying the same sentence in such a way as to express a different idea each time. Thus, the French greeting, *Bon jour, monsieur*, may be expressed to signify a casual greeting to a stranger, a recognition of a person to superior rank, a patroniz-

ing attitude toward a person of no importance, or even an attempt at mere flattery. The student may attempt expressing each of these ideas by means of the English words, "Good morning, sir," and, having mastered the distinctions between them in English, carry over the same distinctions to the French.

There is a great deal more in the speaking of a foreign tongue than simply pronouncing words, just as there is a great deal more involved in dramatizing Shakespeare than in reading Shakespeare.

Learning inflection through imitation. Just as imitation of a good model was found to be useful in learning the sounds of the letters, so it applies in learning the inflection of the sentence and paragraph. It is well to listen to the teacher read an entire paragraph rapidly and fluently, or better still, to listen to her as she speaks the paragraph from memory without the use of the book. There is a tendency for anyone to read in a monotonous or "reading voice" in a foreign language just the same as in English. Consequently, the spoken models which are imitated should be either models of direct conversation or of very skillful oral reading.

A very good plan is for the students, while the teacher talks directly and spontaneously for a minute or two, to repeat what he has said, trying to make it sound as much like his inflection as possible. Conversation in the foreign language about objects and actions within the classroom provides a good opportunity to get out of the routine of the sing-song type of mere word calling, and to put more of the life and expression into the sentences which are spoken. Similarly, mingling with the foreigners who speak the language gives an opportunity to imitate a more natural type of inflection than the average English-speaking foreign language teacher can be expected to possess.

Reading aloud. For the development of oral inflection, reading aloud is obviously better than reading silently. Good oral inflection demands that the mechanics of word calling be so thoroughly mastered that the attention can be taken away from mere word calling and can be given wholly to the thought and to the expression of its subtle elements. Oral reading is a step in this direction. It involves an abundance of practice in the simple mechanics of vocalization, and goes a long way toward mechanizing

them. For this reason, any student who wishes to speak the language should make all possible effort to read aloud in class where the teacher can correct his errors, and to engage in class oral reading in concert, where the example of the other students tends to hold him in line as regards his pronunciation. He should also practice at home, where he can listen to his own voice and reread the same passage time after time until he obtains the desired effect. This oral practice may well be carried out in connection with extremely easy and familiar subject matter which involves no difficulties of comprehension.

The result of this work is that the whole attention can be devoted to the pronunciation and expression of what is read. Reading the same passage over and over gives an opportunity to concentrate on the expression without the handicap of comprehension difficulties.

It is well to practice on fairly long sentences or on paragraph units in order to acquire a mastery of the longer units of expression and the ability to adjust the expression of one part of the sentence to the ideas that are expressed in other and more remote parts.

Furthermore, the sentences should be connected in thought and content rather than completely isolated. The reading of a number of isolated sentences involves the reader's starting at the zero point, as it were, each time; the reading of a paragraph involves his putting a type of expression into one sentence which is demanded by the thought of the paragraph as a whole.

Reading a foreign language to get practice in inflection involves the same limitations as are involved in reading English to get practice in fluent speech. It simply does not go far enough. It is exceedingly difficult for anyone to read from the printed page with as natural and fluent an expression as is involved in ordinary spontaneous expression. The exercises in oral reading which have been suggested should be supplemented, therefore, by an abundance of free speech in order to break away from the unnaturalness that almost certainly goes with reading. In other words, oral reading is considerably better than silent reading as a training in inflection but not nearly so good as free conversation.

Clearness of thought as the chief essential to fluent expression. Just as it is extremely diffi-

cult for a person of little education to deliver effectively a speech which was written for him by some real scholar, so it is difficult for the foreign language student to put effective expression into foreign sentences which he dimly understands. Expression requires something much more fundamental than mere knowledge of a good vocabulary. Fluent expression is proof of clear understanding and cannot exist without it.

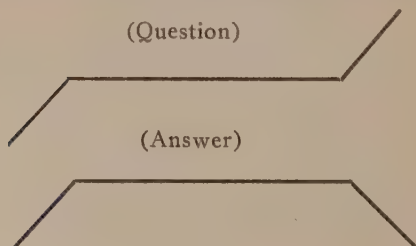
The student should, therefore, study the subject matter very thoroughly in order to know its meaning. He is then in a position to convey that meaning through his expression. A written paragraph may be studied in this way and, after considerable practice, may be mastered to the point of a very acceptable expression. It is likely, after this sort of study, to have somewhat the same status as a speech which a debater has memorized and practiced under the guidance and criticism of a debate coach.

Any memorized speech, or any speech that is delivered after an excessive amount of practice, is likely to have a certain amount of sing-song or stilted expression in it. This is because it has long since ceased to be a thoughtful form of

delivery and has become a parrot-like recitation. It may be well for the student to practice good foreign language delivery in this manner for a while, but he should eventually quit the paragraph upon which he has practiced so much and try to express new and original material as fluently as possible. The more natural type of expression is that which goes with ideas that are fresh and new in the mind at the time they are being expressed.

Graphic analyses of inflection. Numerous attempts have been made to learn proper inflection within the sentence by means of graphic pictures of the rise and fall of the voice. For instance, the pair of graphs in Figure 1 are supposed to illustrate approximately the contrast between the inflection of a question and that of an answer.

FIGURE 1. GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF THE INFLECTION INVOLVED IN A QUESTION AND IN AN ANSWER



The books on public speaking and elocution in times past made considerable use of such graphs to represent the tone patterns for sentences to be read. There is room for considerable doubt, however, regarding the effectiveness and value of such methods. It is difficult for the average person to analyze his own speech in this manner or to follow a graph of this kind after someone has constructed it for him. It is probably more useful to the expert who has already acquired a good inflection and has developed the ability to analyze tones when he hears them than it is for the beginner.

Dramatization. A splendid form of practice by which to develop natural inflection is the dramatization of short plays in the foreign language. Such plays lose much of their value unless the acting involves more than mere word calling. The actor should make an effort to speak the lines naturally in order to bring out their full meaning. He must lose himself in the thought he is expressing and must devote his entire effort to imparting the thought to the audience. The situation is one that naturally encourages the highest type of expression and eliminates the mechanical type of reading voice or monotonous

word calling characteristic of the beginner. Good dramatization is, of course, an advanced learning product, but the effort to dramatize, even in the beginning stages, encourages the learning of good expression.

Poetry and song as aids to expression. One of the merits of poems and songs as practice material in the development of good foreign language expression is that the student is obliged to keep going at a given rate and to give the correct accent and rhythm to his speech. On the other hand, in practicing upon prose material, if a word is encountered which presents difficulty, it is entirely possible to slow up and to pronounce it in a laborious and unnatural fashion because there is not such pronounced rhythm to be considered. When prose is misread, the error is not nearly so noticeable as when poetry is misread. Poetry simply does not sound like poetry unless it is properly rendered.

The student who wishes to learn to read naturally, therefore, must practice time after time, always keeping in mind as his goal such a quality of expression as will make the poem sound like a poem. Singing carries this idea one step further, in that it involves a somewhat

more completely predetermined pattern than poetry which is not to be sung.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Compare the importance of the letter, the syllable, the word, and the paragraph as units in foreign pronunciation.
2. What are the merits and defects of the imitation method?
3. How should sounds which do not exist in English be learned?
4. Prepare a list of points for a debate on one side of the question: Resolved, that foreign languages should be learned by means of phonetics.
5. What use should be made of pronunciation rules?
6. What is the psychological advantage of learning to divide words into syllables?
7. How should the location of the accent be learned?
8. How can the ability to put expression into a foreign language be cultivated?
10. Explain why so much foreign language reading and speaking is done in a monotonous tone of voice.
11. Give every advantage you can that is to be derived from the use of music in connection with foreign languages.
12. What is meant by inflection of the voice?

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CHAPTER IV

VOCABULARY

One of the major problems of foreign language study is the acquisition of foreign words and idioms. The importance of acquiring a working vocabulary as quickly as possible cannot be over-emphasized. It is a first essential and an absolute necessity. There are two principal ways of learning words. The first is learning them in their natural settings, and the second is learning them through formal drills and exercises. Each of these methods will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

I. LEARNING WORDS IN THEIR NATURAL SETTINGS

The average beginner in a foreign language does not realize that there is any better way of acquiring a vocabulary than simply memorizing the lists of words which are printed in the daily lessons in the text. He goes over these lists, repeating each foreign word and its English equivalent, until the sight of one automatically brings up the other. Such a method is uninterest-

ing, ineffectual, and uneconomical. Furthermore, it interferes with the development of ability to think in the foreign language, because it results in associations between foreign and English words instead of between foreign words and the objects or actions to which they refer.

Very seldom do we use isolated words in expressing ourselves. We almost invariably use words in connection with other words in meaningful situations. Good judgment and the desire for economy would suggest, therefore, that a vocabulary be acquired by such a method as permits words to be learned in connection with other words or in connection with the actual ideas which they express. Some methods of doing this will be discussed in the following paragraphs of this section.

Studying new words through reading. A good time to learn the meaning of a new word is when it is encountered in reading, for then its meaning is acquired in response to a genuine feeling of need. It is usually better to get the meaning of such a new word from the context in which it appears than to look it up in the dictionary. The ability to do this will depend upon the experience and ingenuity of the student and must come

with practice. It is sometimes necessary to read the sentence or paragraph two or three times before the particular word becomes clear. In fact, even then the word may have only a rather vague meaning. If, however, a word's meaning can be vaguely guessed the first time, a much better understanding of it will come after it has been seen in other sentences, and thus its meaning will be refined and clarified without the resort to the dictionary or to the teacher.

In other words, the method of learning words from reading context involves deriving the meaning of one word from the meanings of familiar words with which it keeps company.

The use of all-foreign-language dictionaries.

Next to the method of acquiring words through context comes that of acquiring them through the use of a foreign language dictionary which defines the foreign word by means of other foreign words. For example, the Spanish word *sombrero* is defined as *prenda del vestido que sirve para cubrir la cabeza*. Such a definition makes it possible to get the meaning of the word without resorting to the English word and at the same time it gives practice in using other familiar Spanish words in natural combinations.

A splendid dictionary of this type for Spanish is the *Pequeño Larousse*, published by D. C. Heath & Co. The same company publishes the *Petit Larousse* for French.

Making original sentences. As new words are studied it is well for them to be used in complete sentences, along with other words previously learned. These sentences may be written down and the particular new word in each underlined for special emphasis. A good plan is to formulate questions using the words, and to answer these questions so that the words may be used in slightly different combinations in the different sentences. If sentences are made which vary the form of the new word slightly from time to time, an additional advantage is secured. Thus, the word may be used once in the singular and the next time in the plural, or if it is a verb it may be used in sentences with different persons and numbers. Likewise, sentences may be made which bring together for comparison and contrast such closely similar constructions as are likely to be confused. The whole point of this paragraph is that a word has really not been learned until the ability to use it in sentences has been acquired.

Learning words in connection with objects.

One of the most natural settings in which to learn new words is in connection with the objects to which they refer. This establishes a direct association with their respective objects. This method, as has already been shown, is in harmony with the aim of learning to think in the foreign language, and eliminates the handicap of having to go from the foreign word to the idea by the way of the English word as an intermediary link. A good plan is actually to touch or point toward the various objects in the room and call their names. Or, if they are unfamiliar, have someone else who knows their names call them, and repeat them after him.

A very useful vocabulary can be built up in a comparatively short time by thus learning the familiar objects of the classroom. Since they are all present in the concrete form the objects serve as a practical basis for conversation and oral work in the class, and can be readily relearned, in case of forgetting, by the simple expedient of pointing them out and calling their names instead of going to the dictionary or a list of English equivalents. Similar studies may be made of other situations besides the class-

room, such as the dining room, the living room, the street, the country, the city, etc. Students have been known to attach foreign language labels to the various objects in their own rooms and to leave them attached until the names were thoroughly mastered.

The use of pictures. The resort to pictures in vocabulary study has an even wider range of application than the use of objects. It may not be convenient to handle or point to a snake or a lion in the classroom, but it is perfectly feasible to point to pictures of such animals. A good plan is to select some picture which represents a considerable number of familiar objects, and to carry on a rather extended study of the things shown in the picture. Such a method makes it possible to learn at the same time a large number of words which are naturally associated together, and which tend to be used together in ordinary conversation.

For example, if the picture is a winter snow scene representing night-fall, the words which would be illustrated by the picture might include "night," "stars," "sky," "cold," "ice," "snow," etc. Or, if the picture is one of a shepherd guarding his sheep in the meadow, it affords

a rather concentrated unit of practice on the vocabulary of nature. Words studied in such families are more readily learned and are retained longer than lists of scattered words brought together from many fields and representing a miscellaneous list of subjects and ideas.

Studying aloud. Words which are studied only through the eye enter into the active vocabulary with the utmost difficulty. Such words are not readily understood when they are spoken by others, and they are not readily used in one's own speaking. The muscular method of acquiring words—that is, the oral method—is therefore important. Even though the meaning of a word is perfectly clear in the mind when it is seen in print, it is well to repeat the word aloud several times, thinking about its meaning, as a form of extra practice for good measure. This constitutes a method of learning beyond the threshold of immediate mastery for purpose of ready recognition, and also constitutes the first step toward the mastery of the word as a unit in the active speaking and listening vocabulary.

Every student should reserve a considerable period of time outside of school hours for read-

ing aloud and for intensive oral drill on words whose meanings have already been acquired.

Acquiring a conversational vocabulary. The acquisition of a conversational vocabulary involves two elements. One is that of mastering the words which are commonly used in ordinary conversation, and the other consists of learning these words in such a way that they can be readily put to use for conversational purposes and can be understood when others use them in conversation. The choice of the words to be learned should emphasize practical life situations, rather than purely literary situations. The student should constantly be alert for words and phrases which will be useful in conversational situations. He should then use these words by much repetition in conversational drills, either in the form of imaginary conversations or in the actual presence of other students. Each time a word is put to use it tends to be more firmly fixed in the memory, and a feeling of naturalness in using it is built up. The conversational vocabulary is rather rich in speech idioms and colloquial uses which are not so commonly found in print. It is entirely possible, in fact, that many of the more common terms used in ordinary con-

versation in the foreign language would never be mastered except through actual contact with them in free conversation.

Proverbs and idioms as elements in vocabulary study. Proverbs offer excellent material for vocabulary study because they include the familiar words of the language. Furthermore, they are in a "catchy" form that is easily retained and recalled. They enable anyone to express himself colloquially and to understand others when they speak. The native in using his language constantly makes use of proverbs and idioms to express his thoughts. Such expressions as "better late than never," or "a stitch in time saves nine," come in very handy to illuminate statements which otherwise would be rather abstract and formal.

It is said that the proverbs of the Spanish language have been found to number about 80,000. Knowing the meaning and getting the point of these proverbs and idioms is just as important and just as essential as knowing the meaning of individual words. In fact, many times the unit of thought is not the word at all, but rather the group of words constituting some proverb or idiom. It is possible to know every word in a

sentence, and still be unable to get any meaning from the sentence.

Consequently, it behooves every student to make a definite purposeful study of the idiomatic expressions in order to master this most important phase of vocabulary. For example, a very helpful book by Moreno-Lacalle, entitled *Spanish Idioms and Phrases*, contains lists of expressions, followed by completion exercises for practice in choosing the correct idiom to fit the occasion.

The student may keep also a notebook of idioms and proverbs as they are met within his study, adding to the list from time to time. Such a notebook should be more than a formal exercise, however. It should be an aid to the oral practice and use of the expressions collected, rather than simply a storage place for idioms that are to be forgotten.

One limitation of the study of proverbs and idioms is that they are likely to include a number of obsolete words.

Acquiring words from conversation. Just as new words may be learned from context in reading, so they may also be learned from context in speaking. For example, if one is talking with a native who uses a new word in a sentence in

which all the other words are familiar, the new word may be explained by its associates. If not, the speaker may be asked to explain the word, in which case he will in all probability give its English equivalent by simply varying the setting or using it in some other connection that makes it self-explanatory. Such a method avoids many of the difficulties inherent in learning new words through books and dictionaries.

Summarizing and paraphrasing reading material. A good form of practice in the use of new words to complete their mastery is to express in original sentences in one's own words the general substance and thought of a few paragraphs of reading matter. The paragraph should be thoroughly studied and learned beforehand, so that the words are definitely established in the passive or reading vocabulary, after which the process of embodying them in the active or speaking vocabulary may be begun.

With the thought of the story thoroughly in mind and with its vocabulary reasonably well mastered, the student may well close the book and begin telling a real or imaginary companion what is in the paragraphs. Not having the book available for detailed guidance, it becomes neces-

sary to strike out on a somewhat new course, at least as regards the phrasing of the sentences used. The vocabulary and thought of the original story, however, will still be available in the mind as raw material to be used in the paraphrasing or summarizing.

These exercises in summarizing may be conducted either orally or in writing, or in both, since each yields a slightly different type of mastery of vocabulary.

Intensive versus extensive reading as an aid to vocabulary. Both extensive and intensive reading have important places in building up a vocabulary. The extensive reading is particularly valuable for increasing the passive vocabulary, while the intensive reading contributes more to the active vocabulary. Intensive reading involves not only reading for thought, but also for a thorough understanding of every word. It may involve underlining all new words and phrases for special emphasis. The aim is not so much to cover material as to acquire thoroughness of mastery of the few pages which are read. It involves allowing no unfamiliar word or expression to escape the attention, and also involves stopping to devote special study to the different parts.

Intensive reading is not so helpful in enlarging vocabulary as it is in impressing more deeply upon the memory the few words which are learned.

Extensive reading, on the other hand, results in acquiring a large vocabulary, though it may leave many of the words without an absolutely clear and definite meaning. There is an erroneous idea on the part of many students that extensive reading is something for only the advanced student. As a matter of fact, however, the beginner may profit considerably from it. The following suggestions are intended to help the beginner to get more vocabulary benefits from extensive reading:

- (1) Read for the thought rather than for the literal meaning of each word.

- (2) Re-read the same paragraph or sentence two or three times, in preference to looking up unfamiliar words in the dictionary.

- (3) Do not hesitate to guess at the meaning of a new word, nor to infer its meaning from the meaning of the rest of the sentence or from its similarity to English.

Reading by such methods frequently becomes

as fascinating as a game and as enticing as a puzzle.

II. FORMAL VOCABULARY DRILLS AND EXERCISES

As was said at the beginning of the previous section, it is generally preferable to learn vocabulary in a normal situation or in a natural setting in connection with some kind of real use of the language. There are other methods of acquiring vocabulary which have merit, however, and which may be found quite useful by certain individuals and for special purposes. These will be discussed next.

Studying antonyms and synonyms. The study of pairs of words expressing opposite or contrasting meanings is a very fruitful method. In fact, it is almost as easy to learn the words for "good" and "bad" at the same time as it is to learn one of these alone, and the same is true regarding "up" and "down," "black" and "white," "go" and "come," "rise" and "sit," and so on. Pairs of words may thus be selected for the study of nouns, verbs, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, and so on.

The same principle holds true in connection

with synonyms. When there are two or three words which express the same general thought, it is economical to learn them all at once while on the subject. Not only is it economical to associate all these different words with the same idea or object, but also bringing them all to mind at once enables each to render its own bit of service in clarifying the meaning of the others. Thus, when four or five different adjectives signifying beauty or attractiveness have been learned and used in connection with the description of a flower, each comes to constitute a further definition or explanation of the others, and they all become associated in the mind with the image or picture of the flower described.

A fruitful exercise for utilizing antonyms and synonyms in vocabulary study is to list a number of words down the middle of the page, with considerable space between, and then to write on one side of each word all the synonyms for it which are known, and on the opposite side all the antonyms which can be thought of.

The study of derivatives. Much help in learning new words can be gained by observing their relations to English words which have been derived from them. A study of prefixes and suf-

fixes often renders the same type of service. The similarity between *introducir* or *producir* in Spanish, and "introduce" and "produce" in English, makes it possible in a moment to determine the meaning of the Spanish words. Frequently the derivation cannot be traced directly from the foreign to the English word, but can be traced from the foreign to the Latin and thence to the English. If the student has some little acquaintance already with the principal suffixes and prefixes and root-stems of a number of English words, he can, without very much difficulty, figure out the meanings of foreign words which he has never seen before.

Sometimes the knowledge of the meaning of two separate parts which have been combined into one word may be used to interpret the word, as in the case of nouns which are followed by the diminutive endings *ita*, *ica*, *illa*, etc., in Spanish. Likewise, once having learned the meaning of the proper suffixes, it is possible to interpret such a word as *relojero*, "jeweler," from its similarity to the word *reloj*, "watch." There are hundreds of foreign words which can be recognized through their association with the equivalent English words. For instance, large numbers of English words which end in

ion have approximately the same spelling in Spanish and in French, and are almost self-explanatory. In many cases, however, the words are not so easily interpreted by means of their derivatives and must be learned by more direct methods.

Analyzing words for literal meanings. The meanings of numerous foreign words can be discerned by dividing them into small units and translating each small part literally. Thus, the French word *parapluie*, when translated literally, means "for rain." This serves as a mental link between the word and its English equivalent, umbrella. When a new word is encountered it may be well to analyze it by some such method as has been illustrated above, and then try to think of the common word which means the same thing or is closely associated in meaning with the parts which have been translated literally.

Grouping words that pertain to a given subject. What has been said regarding synonyms and antonyms applies also to words that cluster around a given subject or topic. For example, in learning the word "hand," it may be convenient and economical to learn the names of the

other parts of the body along with the hand. Likewise, in learning the name for "uncle," it may be well to learn also the name for "aunt," "cousin," "father," "grandfather," "mother," and so on. Similar groups of words may center around the classroom, the home, flowers, animals, etc. If a number of such families of words are thoroughly mastered, a practical vocabulary is built up and it is possible to speak or write at considerable length about topics that have been learned. If the topical units are well chosen, and if these families of words deal with the objects of everyday life, the student should be able to make his knowledge of the language function very nicely.

Vocabulary notebooks. A notebook, if well organized according to some logical and definite plan, may be a valuable asset to the language student. New words faithfully written down, with their meanings made clear by pictures, synonyms, or sentences, are likely to be remembered. If this method is applied to a reasonably small number of very difficult or very important words it proves very effective. An error to avoid, however, is that of compiling long lists of words without keen focalization of attention upon their

meanings. A home-made dictionary is likely to be less useful than one which is bought, unless the entries in it are considerably more meaningful to the student than the printed entries in the regular dictionary.

The following suggestions concerning the arrangement and grouping of the words in the notebook should be of considerable value:

(1) Words may be arranged alphabetically under subject heads, with all words relating to the classroom on one page or in one section of the notebook, those about the home in another, those about the store, the weather, etc., in still other sections. New subject groups or family units may be begun as needed.

(2) The words may be organized around pictures which are drawn or pasted in the notebook. This is a particularly good method for the beginner, and consists of including a reasonably small picture upon a page which has plenty of room for writing, and then listing in column form as many words as can be thought of which are explained by the picture. The notebook may then be studied by looking at the picture and trying to find the word for each part of the picture, or by looking at the words first and trying

to find the portion of the picture which explains them.

(3) The words in the notebook may be classified according to their grammatical functions. Thus, all nouns may be kept in one section, and pronouns, prepositions, etc., in other sections. These may be still further divided according to their nature and use. Thus, the verbs of motion, such as "go," "come," "run," "walk," etc., may be classed together.

(4) The words may be classified according to the basic root from which they come. Thus, the words for "shade," "shadow," "hat," and "gloomy" all have the same common element in Spanish, namely, the root *sombr*. Likewise, large numbers of other words show up as verbs, nouns, adverbs, adjectives, etc., with slight changes from one to the other.

5) Numerous other plans and systems may be thought of and numerous adaptations of the ones just mentioned may be made. The suggestions that have been given here are not meant to be exhaustive or complete.

Defining words. Learning words through definitions is a very common and useful method of increasing vocabulary. There are many ways of

defining a word besides the method of simply giving its English meaning. For example, the word may be classified under a more general term and then differentiated from all the other members of that general class by stating its distinguishing features. Similarly, it may be defined in terms of the use to which the object is put, or in terms of other approximately equivalent words in the same language. A reasonably effective method of defining a word is to use it in two or three sentences which are sufficiently different in content or construction to show up the unique elements in the word in question.

Completion exercises. There are numerous types of sentence completion exercises which may be used to enlarge a vocabulary. For example, the sentence "An apple is——" may be completed by the addition of such words as "red," "large," "round," "good," "sweet," "a fruit," etc. Likewise, the sentence, "A dog can——," may be completed by the insertion of as many verbs as are appropriate to the dog. These exercises, of course, are to be carried out altogether in the foreign language.

In closing this chapter, the reader should be reminded that the procedures described in the

first section are much more in harmony with the spirit of the direct method than are those of the second. Since languages are studied for different purposes in different schools, however, there is merit in both types of methods, provided, of course, that they are properly selected to suit the aim for which the language is being studied.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Discuss the relative merits of learning words in their natural settings and learning them by formal exercises.
2. What are the advantages and limitations of learning words as they are met in reading?
3. What difficulties would be encountered in using an all-foreign-language dictionary?
4. What is the difference between conversational and literary vocabulary?
5. What is an idiom and how is it best learned?
6. What are the relative merits of extensive and intensive reading as means of enlarging the vocabulary?
7. Make up a long list of pairs or groups of words which it would be economical to learn together.
8. How should words which are related to English words be learned?

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CHAPTER V

SPELLING

In many respects, learning to spell in a foreign language is the same as learning to spell in English. Anyone who has learned good methods of mastering English spelling should have no great difficulty in mastering foreign spelling, if he will apply the same technique to the foreign language that he already uses in English. There is a considerable element of arbitrary association, or engaging in mere routine memorizing, which must be done in learning the spelling of any language, particularly if it is one which involves numbers of irregularities and eccentricities of spelling such as we find in English. This chapter discusses briefly a few of the major principles underlying the mastery of spelling, with particular application to the spelling of foreign words.

Advantages of postponing spelling until other abilities are acquired. Numerous writers on foreign language methods stress the point that spelling should not be undertaken at the outset of foreign language study. It is suggested that spelling should be postponed until words have

become familiar through reading and speaking. The child who learns English spelling in an up-to-date school has already become familiar with the spoken and printed forms of English words before he begins to spell them; the same should be true of foreign languages. If the spelling is put off until the pronunciation and visual recognition of the word have been well mastered, only one difficulty is encountered at a time. On the other hand, if the student jumps into the midst of the spelling problem at the very beginning, he has several difficulties to face and master at once, and his mental energies are very badly divided.

Ability to spell a word is not essential to the proper use of that word in speaking, nor is it necessary for reading comprehension. It really becomes essential only when writing is begun, and for this reason the student should spend the early portion of the course in speaking and reading activities, rather than writing activities, in order to avoid coming prematurely into contact with the spelling problem. It is found that if the speaking and reading work are well done, the spelling problem is very greatly simplified when the time does come for it to receive attention.

There is another phase of this question which also is important, namely, that spelling is psychologically unsuited to the beginner in language study. Words are much more concrete than letters. They carry meanings of their own while letters as such have none. Very primitive people evolved words for purposes of communication, but letters to represent those words were developed later in man's history and represent a more artificial psychological unit than do words. It is, therefore, considerably more in keeping with human nature to base the first steps in language study upon words and sentences, than upon the abstract elements within those words.

This point is in keeping with modern theories regarding the teaching of reading and spelling to the child in the lower grades. The old alphabet method has been practically abandoned, and it is not uncommon now for a child to finish the first grade without knowing his letters. A similar thing is entirely possible in foreign language study, and, in fact, many of the authorities recommend it.

Meaning as an aid to spelling. The meaning of the word should be very clearly and definitely associated with it at the time it is spelled. Mere

formal exercises in spelling foreign words contribute little useful service to the student. Two words may sound exactly alike, and yet be spelled quite differently. Unless the meanings are clear, the spelling is as likely to be that of one word as the other. Spelling seldom takes place, outside of the language class itself, under any other circumstances than in connection with writing; hence, the spelling of the word must be correlated with its thought or meaning in the sentence.

Spelling and vocabulary, therefore, have a close relationship; unless a word is in the student's vocabulary there is little or no reason why its spelling should be learned. To be able to spell a word and not know its meaning is simply to possess a useless item of knowledge, because there is no occasion to spell words that do not belong to the vocabulary of the person who is doing the writing.

Pronunciation as related to spelling. Mastery of the foreign pronunciation will go far toward solving the spelling problem. If the student pronounces a word correctly his chances of misspelling it are very greatly reduced. In fact, in such a language as Spanish, which is spelled very nearly as it is pronounced, a mastery of pronun-

ciation almost takes care of spelling. Yet it is unsafe in most languages to rely wholly upon sound as a guide to spelling. There is no language in which the spelling is absolutely true to the pronunciation. To realize this fact will place the student on guard against irregularities and exceptions, and will eliminate a number of errors which come from spelling words as they sound.

Even in the case of words the spelling of which is radically different from the pronunciation, it is still very important that the pronunciation be learned and associated with the spelling. If it is not, there is danger that the pronunciation will be butchered by making it conform to the spelling. For example, if the spelling of such a French word as *feuilles* is learned before the pronunciation of the word has been acquired, the spelling is likely to suggest some such pronunciation as "foolies." There is always the difficulty that spelling may injure pronunciation, and also the companion difficulty that pronunciation may injure spelling. The only safe way to avoid either of these is to emphasize the connection between them so strongly that, if they are different, the differences will be clearly recognized and provided for.

The relation between grammar and spelling.

Certain aspects of spelling in most languages conform to definite and consistent rules which, if well learned, will eliminate many difficulties. For example, the rule in French and in Spanish that *g* is soft before *e* and *i*, and hard before *a*, *o*, and *u*, explains the insertion of the vowel *u* before *e* and *i* in such words as require the preservation of the hard sound. Similarly, the Spanish radical changing verbs follow certain definite rules quite consistently. Also, there are many problems of foreign language spelling which in reality are more truly problems of grammar than of spelling, since they consist mainly of choosing the right inflections or endings for words.

A word may be divided into two parts, as far as its spelling is concerned. One part is the basic root or stem which usually remains constant, and simply must be learned by arbitrary or rote methods; the other part is the ending, which varies according to the number, person, case, tense, etc. A thorough mastery of the grammatical forms ordinarily will take care of the spelling of this latter portion of the word. This is not always true, however, and the student must not fall into the error of thinking that mastery

of the spelling of a word in one of its grammatical forms will solve the problem of spelling it in other forms. Just as in English a child may be able to spell the word "write" but miss the word "writing," so in foreign languages he must give attention to the spelling of a word in its different forms, rather than trusting blindly in the rules which govern the spelling for the different moods, tenses, cases, etc. An example is found in learning Spanish orthographical changing verbs. Correct spelling of the words, *buscar*, and *buscaré*, is greatly aided by a knowledge of the reason for the change from *c* to *qu*.

Visualization as an important element in spelling. The spelling of a word should be acquired, in a large measure, upon the basis of visual imagery, since spelling takes place mainly in writing situations. A clear visual image of the word will make it possible to detect errors, because the misspelled words will not look right after they are written. The act of writing the word, therefore, not only gives a training of a muscular sort, but it also yields as an important by-product the mental images of complete words. Another good way of acquiring visual imagery is to look carefully at the word that is to be learned, and then

try to recall it after looking away from the page upon which it was written. The point of this paragraph is not that the sole method of learning spelling should be visual, but that the visual element should not be entirely neglected in favor of oral spelling or in favor of the reliance upon rules and grammatical knowledge.

Syllabification. It has been suggested that breaking up words into syllables renders a service to spelling comparable to that rendered by dividing automobile license numbers into groups of three digits each, instead of printing them all in one solid formation. When the license numbers are so divided into groups it is considerably easier to learn them and retain them in the memory. Likewise, foreign words which are long and difficult become much easier if the attention is focused upon one syllable at a time. The mere device of writing out the word by syllables not only facilitates formation of the necessary visual imagery, but also helps in the analysis of the word according to sound. An example of this is the Spanish word *almuerzo*, which does not seem so difficult to grasp when it is written *al-muer-zo*.

The student should, of course, avoid dividing foreign words into syllables according to the plan

used in English. Thus, it is customary in English to retain the consonant at the end of a syllable and begin the next syllable with a vowel, whereas in certain other languages the preference is given to beginning the syllable with a consonant and ending it with a vowel.

Accents, umlauts, etc. Most foreign languages have a number of special marks which are used to qualify the sounds of words, and which cause the beginning student considerable difficulty. The written accent, for example, is frequently omitted, misplaced, or used by students where it is not required, and is a source of considerable annoyance. The German umlaut causes a similar sort of difficulty, as does also the tilde over the *n* in Spanish, and the cedilla under the soft *c* in French. The greatest mistake of the beginning student in connection with such special symbols is that of considering them as mere extras, accessories, or minor additions, rather than as integral parts of the words to which they belong. They are in reality just as essential as are the dots for *i*'s and the crosses for *t*'s; to omit them or misuse them is just as serious a spelling error as to omit or misuse any other letters in the alphabet. Simply remembering that the accent

is written over a vowel and not over a consonant, should be of some service. But in general the use of such symbols must be learned by means of the same plan of attack as is employed on all the other phases of spelling.

Learning related words together. In every language there are numbers of words which have similar sounds and different spellings, or different sounds and similar spellings, and which ordinarily tend to become confused with each other. Such words should be learned in groups or pairs, so that similarities and contrasts may be firmly fixed in mind and confusion avoided. Students sometimes find it profitable to practice by concentrating on groups of words which have the same sounds represented by different spellings, and also by beginning with a certain sound and spelling as many words as possible which contain it. To spell a number of words in this way helps to fix in mind the association between that particular combination of letters and that particular sound, provided that the words are all consistent; if they are not consistent, it helps to call attention to the irregularity, inconsistency, or contrast.

Spelling reform. Nearly every language shows

some discrepancy between spelling and sound, but few are more irregular and inconsistent in this respect than the English. Most of these peculiarities of spelling are not so arbitrary and unreasonable as they sometimes appear. Words of which the spelling and the sound differ are usually those whose pronunciation has changed during the evolution of the language, and those which today are pronounced differently from what they were at an early period. Their spelling, however, has tended to remain the same because of the inertia of the written language. The consequence is that the changes in pronunciation run away from the more conservative written forms, and the gap between them becomes rather noticeable. A little study of the origin and history of the language will explain many of these irregularities and peculiarities and will greatly simplify the task of learning the spelling. This process of change is still going on at the present day.

Linguists who are interested in the problem of language reform are striving to correct the discrepancies and to bridge the gaps between sound and spelling by modernizing the spelling. Thus, we have in English the attempts at simp-

lified spelling illustrated by the use of such words as "thru" instead of "through," etc. Similar movements are under way in all the foreign countries, and in many cases the new or modern form has gained recognition so that it is accepted as of equivalent merit or worth with the older and more primitive form. The student of the language will, of course, have little to do with the basic problems of spelling reform, but he should appreciate the significance of what the experts are doing, and should be able to co-operate intelligently with them in their efforts to modernize the language.

In cases where there are two ways of spelling the same word, the student should adopt the more modern one, and thus throw his influence upon the side of progress and reform rather than upon that of conservatism. This policy should be distinguished, however, from the practice of adopting dialect peculiarities, or purely local and provincial forms of spelling. Thus, the adoption of the Mexican spelling of a given word in preference to the Spanish spelling is more likely to be a concession to local dialect than an effort to co-operate in scientific spelling reform.

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QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Point out as many differences as you can between foreign and English spelling.
2. What is gained and what lost by postponing the spelling problem until contact with the language has been made?
3. Compare the relative values of meaning and pronunciation as aids to spelling.
4. How does the stem differ from the ending of a word?
5. How should the placing of written accents and similar marks be learned?
6. What relation does the student have to such movements as simplified spelling or spelling reform?

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CHAPTER VI

LISTENING TO THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE

The ability to understand a foreign language when it is spoken by another person is quite separate and distinct from the ability to read or speak it. It is quite common for students to develop a high degree of reading and speaking ability, and still be almost completely at a loss in the presence of someone who speaks the language fluently. The present chapter, therefore, is devoted to methods of acquiring this type of mastery of the foreign tongue. This topic will be discussed under two divisions, as follows: (1) Underlying principles, and (2) Types of listening exercises.

I. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The basic principle in learning to understand the spoken language is to hear it spoken. Just as one cannot learn to swim without swimming, so one cannot learn to understand a foreign tongue without much practice in hearing it. The

student should, therefore, take advantage of every opportunity possible to hear it spoken.

Mere listening, however, is not enough. It is necessary that the listening be carried out in accordance with certain guiding principles or rules in order that the most benefit may be derived from it. Some of these principles will be mentioned in this section.

Listening for thought, instead of for words.
When a student makes an effort to grasp the words that are spoken, he is likely to find that the person speaking goes entirely too fast for him. Ordinary conversational speech involves the pronouncing of at least 100 words a minute, and this is more than the beginner in a foreign language is able to comprehend. Consequently, it is necessary to listen for the meaning of word-groups, rather than for the sounds of isolated words. In fact, individual words are often misleading and devoid of meaning in themselves; they convey their message only in so far as they are combined with other words. For example, the two French words *ne* and *pas* are separate, as regards sound and spelling, but are absolutely meaningless when separated, and are never

thought of by the French people as two words but rather as one idea.

In listening, just as in reading, therefore, it is necessary to learn to grasp groups of words as thought-units, without attempting to catch each individual word as a separate item. To try to listen to individual words in a foreign language is as ineffectual and futile as it would be if a person focused his eyes upon one individual brick after another in the wall as his method of observing the architecture of a building. In other words, the details must lose their identity in the major scheme or pattern of the whole.

Establishing direct associations between sound and sense. It is absolutely futile to try to understand the spoken language readily by resorting to translation of the foreign words into English as the method of arriving at their meanings. The spoken words must call up the basic images or ideas directly without going through the intermediary stage of English words, or the listening process will be slowed down to such a pace as to be almost worthless. Everything that was said in the previous chapter on thinking in the foreign language is applicable here as well.

Listening to a variety of voices. Many a foreign

language student has had the experience of learning to understand perfectly his own teacher speaking in the foreign language, and then being almost hopelessly incapable of understanding anyone else. Voices differ just as faces, temperaments, and personalities do. It is necessary to listen to a large number of different persons before the generalized capacity for understanding the language is developed. In the earlier stages it may be well to concentrate a great deal of the practice upon listening to one individual, such as the teacher, because contact with many voices at the early stage may be somewhat confusing. But after the ability to understand one person fairly well has been acquired, it is well to practice listening to voices of different pitch, quality, rate, accent, and inflection.

The first time a strange voice is heard it may be almost meaningless, but after some practice a few familiar words will begin to emerge out of the confusion and soon the whole situation will clear up. It is then time to switch to another voice and practice listening to it until it has been mastered, and so on indefinitely. A student who hopes to understand the natives of a foreign country should by all means insist upon hearing the

language spoken by other persons besides his foreign language teacher in school, not because his teacher may not speak the language well, but because there is individuality in voices. In fact, if the teacher speaks perfectly, that is all the more reason for practicing the art of listening to someone else. In the foreign country few people will be encountered who take pains to enunciate carefully and yet they must be understood. It is necessary to be able to understand careless speech in the foreign tongue as well as perfect or correct speech.

The importance of repetition as an aid to understanding the spoken language. The first time a sentence is heard it may be absolutely meaningless to the listener. If he asks to have it repeated, it may mean little or nothing the second time. A little further repetition, however, may suddenly seem to clarify the entire sentence all at once. Understanding the spoken foreign language is similar in this respect to memorizing a poem in English by the whole method. After the poem has been repeated once it seems not to have been memorized at all, but after several repetitions it seems to come rather suddenly, from beginning to end.

To listen to someone speaking and not to be able to understand a word seems rather discouraging, and the average student has strong temptations to resort to some such method as translating one or two words, or asking the speaker to translate the whole sentence into English, instead of patiently getting what he can from the spoken language and trusting to later repetitions to complete the learning processes. Students have found themselves suddenly thrust into French classes in which all the conversation was in French and in which they seemed to be unable to understand a word, but after a week or two of immersion in the French atmosphere and of constant hearing of French words they were able, all of a sudden, to get the meaning from the whole sentences or paragraphs of spoken French.

This repetition of spoken words may be secured in either of two ways. In the first place, it may be possible to ask the speaker to repeat the sentence as a whole immediately, or even to have him repeat it two or three times. This should be done if the occasion is suitable. In the second place, there is a type of repetition which is quite useful when such a request is out

of order. That is to let the speaker go on and say something else, even though his first statement was not understood. His second sentence will repeat words which were used previously, even though in new combinations, and the meaning will eventually begin to become reasonably clear.

Facial expression as an aid in listening. The words which a speaker utters are much more meaningful if his face can be seen when he utters them. It is universally recognized that listening to a lecture in English when the view of the speaker is obstructed by a post or column in the auditorium is a handicap. This would be even more true in listening to a foreign language. A speaker talks not only with his voice, but also with his eyes, his facial muscles, his hands, and, in fact, his whole body. If the listener makes full use of all these by-products or supplementary aids to understanding, he may miss a great many of the words and still be able to follow the trend of the thought and to fill in the gaps with the aid of what he gets through the eye.

Inflection of the voice as an aid to listening. It was brought out in the chapter on pronunciation that the speaker in using a language conveys

his meaning not only by the words he utters, but also by means of the pitch patterns in which those words are presented. The application of that point to our present problem is rather important. The listener must take account not only of the words he hears, but of the inflection, or the expression, in the voice accompanying them. One of the writers attended recently a dramatic presentation by a troop of Japanese actors, and, not ever having studied Japanese at all, was totally unable to recognize a single word. Much of the meaning of the play could be gained, however, by simply noting the way in which the words were expressed. It was not difficult to determine whether a speaker was angry or surprised, or simply making a matter-of-fact statement.

This use of the inflection of the speaker's voice, when coupled with the observation of his face, gestures, and general bodily movements, often will supply the meaning when half of the words which are heard are not understood. The method is the same as that which must be employed by theater-goers who get rear seats in the second balcony and are unable to hear distinctly. This difficulty of understanding usually disappears

long before the end of the first act, particularly if eyesight is good and there is reasonable concentration of the attention.

Listening for key words. Each sentence usually contains a word or phrase which, if comprehended, will make the meaning of the entire sentence clear. It may be the subject, verb, or some other part, depending upon the thought that is expressed. A small child learns these words first. When he cries for water his mother asks, "Do you want a drink?" and he learns the key word "drink," which, thereafter, becomes his signal for water. This key-word idea is equally applicable in learning a foreign language. If one or two significant expressions can be grasped, it is not so serious if some of the other words in the sentence are temporarily left meaningless.

The converse of this, is sometimes true, since one unfamiliar word or phrase may completely block or prevent the understanding of the entire sentence or paragraph. Every language student can testify to cases of this kind. It may be necessary in such instances to resort to the dictionary, or to ask the speaker directly for an

explanation of the key word which is causing the difficulty.

Speaking as an aid to listening. Not only should the student hear the language spoken, but, if possible, he should arrange for an opportunity occasionally where he can reply to the speaker's questions or statements. This is not only good training in speaking, but it is also a splendid check upon the success and accuracy of the listening. If the sentence that was heard was only partly understood, the response will reveal that the idea gained was either correct or incorrect. If correct, the impressions are confirmed and more fully established; if incorrect, the error will be noticed and corrected. For this reason a certain amount of speaking must necessarily be combined with the practice in listening.

The question of speed. The almost universal reaction of the beginner, in listening to a native of the foreign country speaking the language, is that he speaks too fast. This experience of listening to a speaker going at lightning speed is very discouraging. It is necessary to ask him to speak more slowly in order that the meaning may be more effectually grasped. This applies, however, to the beginner much more than it does to the

advanced student. Not only can the advanced student understand rapid speech better, but it is necessary for him to practice listening to rapid speech before he is really a master of the art of listening, even to slow speech.

Slow speaking is unnatural; it tends to be stilted, monotonous, and expressionless. If all one's listening to a foreign language is limited to very slow speech, learning to understand vigorous and natural conversation will never be accomplished. Just as certain plants may need to be cultivated in a hothouse when they are young and tender, but can attain their full growth and maturity only after being transplanted to a more natural environment, so the student of a foreign language must sooner or later get away from the necessity of having the speaker speak at a snail's pace for his benefit.

II. TYPES OF LISTENING EXERCISES

There are numbers of situations in which the student may secure practice in hearing the foreign language spoken. The following are a few illustrations:

Listening to one's own voice. A type of listening which is always available to the student is that

in which he hears his own voice while speaking or reading aloud. Its great advantage lies in its always being available. Its limitation is that if one's mastery of the spoken language is weak he tends to drill himself incorrectly in understanding it, and thus he interferes somewhat with the understanding of the language when others speak it correctly. It is only a half-way measure, because before one can speak the language freely he must know the words which he is speaking; he is, therefore, deprived of the experience of interpreting new material.

This handicap is somewhat reduced in the case of oral reading, because the material read may be unfamiliar and thus may present a somewhat larger amount of practice in interpreting the meaning. Even so, the recognition of the oral sounds is made too easy because of the fact that the words are being presented through the eye at the same time. A further disadvantage of this method is that so much mental and physical effort may be required to pronounce the words that little energy is left to be devoted to getting the thought or meaning.

Listening to others read. To have another person read a passage aloud is a good method of

practicing the art of listening. The best results will be accomplished when the material is not too difficult, and when the reader can proceed at a natural and normal rate. It is also desirable that the reader understand very clearly the material he is reading, in order that he may read it fluently and expressively. There is much to be said in favor of choosing a fairly long unit of printed matter, possibly three or four pages, and reading this material several times. If a passage is not understood, it may either be repeated at the time, or else simply passed by with the hope that it will clear up during the next reading.

Students working in pairs may do much to aid each other in understanding the spoken language if they will take turns in reading to each other aloud, in some such fashion as has been described. Ordinarily it is preferable for some kind of check to be employed to determine how thoroughly the material that was read has been understood by the listener.

Silent reading to accompany listening to oral reading. A very good method of practicing the recognition of spoken words in the foreign language, particularly in the early stages of the

study, is for the teacher to read aloud, while members of the class follow him by reading the same material silently in their own books. This makes it possible to correlate the oral and visual presentation of a word so that, if one is weak when the other is strong, the stronger may supplement the weaker form of presentation. Thus, if a word is only vaguely heard or understood through the ear, its meaning and identity may be more completely established by contact with it at the same time through the eye.

Writing from dictation. A method of training in listening which is very extensively used in foreign language classes is writing the foreign language from dictation. This plan gives a maximum amount of training in understanding the individual words, and in noting the detailed spelling and grammatical endings. It also provides a very definite method of checking up on the accuracy of the hearing, and provides for the later correction of errors.

The plan has a few limitations, however. One of these is that it is a test of the recognition of foreign words, but not a test of the recognition of their meanings. A second limitation is that, since writing is usually rather slow, the method

is time-consuming. Also, dictation is likely to be unnatural and not typical of ordinary conversational speech. If the dictation proceeds on the plan of four or five words, followed by a long pause, and then four or five more words after the students have written the first group, there is really little similarity to the situation of listening to a native of the foreign country speaking the language. A good corrective for this last difficulty is to have the teacher read an entire sentence, even though it may be rather long, in order to give the students a chance to hear it all in connected form, and then to re-read it on the installment plan, trying to break it up into natural phrases, clauses, or thought units.

The use of phonograph records and the radio.

For a number of years foreign language phonograph records have been used by many students and teachers of the languages. These have the advantage of being willing to repeat patiently, time after time; they also make it possible to secure a variety of different speaking voices to which to listen, since it is possible to purchase several records, each produced by a different speaker. It is also possible to secure by way of phonograph records a direct contact with actual

natives of the foreign country, and thus to compensate for the shortcomings frequently found in the speech of native Americans.

The radio offers many of the same advantages as the phonograph, and some additional ones. It involves the difficulty that the program cannot be predicted, controlled, or adapted at will to the needs of particular schools and classes.

Language clubs and language houses. Students who are interested in learning to understand the spoken language may profitably band themselves together for mutual aid and training. The language club, with weekly or biweekly meetings, is one example of this method. Many times, college students and students in boarding schools find it possible to go further than this, and arrange for a foreign language table in the dining room, at which no English is spoken, and at which all conversation must be conducted in the foreign tongue. At three meal periods per day of such social use of the foreign language, much can be accomplished if the practice is continued throughout the year. Some of the colleges and universities are known to have a French, a Spanish, an Italian, or a German house, in which students live and board, and in which

not only is the foreign language the sole medium of conversation, but in which also the pictures on the walls and the general furnishings of the house carry out the spirit of the foreign country. The customs, conventions, and etiquette of the foreign land also may prevail in such a home. In one instance an enterprising boarding-house keeper was able to secure more boarders by converting the boarding house into a German house than he had formerly been able to get when he operated in the usual manner.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What difference is there between the methods which are best for learning to speak a language and for learning to understand it when it is spoken?
2. Give several illustrations of the point that thought units are not the same as word units.
3. Why is the direct method especially important in learning to understand a foreign language?
4. What is gained and what lost by confining one's listening experience to a single person's voice?
5. What proportion of the meaning is derived from the words themselves and what proportion from the gestures, facial expressions, and inflections of the person's voice?
6. Why is speaking a desirable device to aid in learning to understand a language?

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7. What are the factors for and against rapid speech as training in understanding?
8. How can a student learn to understand a foreign language when his contacts with those who speak it are limited?
9. Give as many advantages as you can for listening to dictation.
10. What is your reaction to the idea of a language club?

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CHAPTER VII

SPEAKING

The fundamental basis of the method of learning to speak a language is to get practice in actually speaking it. The process is largely one of habit-formation, or the development of skill. Information about the language does not guarantee the ability to speak it. This information or knowledge must be accompanied by practice. Much of the muscular type of learning is involved in speaking a foreign tongue, although the task is not purely and solely a muscular one. The following methods and suggestions have grown out of the experiences of numerous students and teachers of foreign languages, and are offered here for the guidance of others who desire to acquire a speaking mastery of foreign languages.

Questions and answers as the basis for practice in speaking. The typical situation in which a novice uses a language in a foreign country is a question-and-answer one. For example, he desires to know the location of a street or hotel,

and has to ask someone where to find it. A question-and-answer type of oral practice is, therefore, a good form of preparation for ordinary life situations. There is another advantage in practicing with questions, since the answer to a question tends to repeat some of the basic words and constructions involved in the original question but in a somewhat changed grammatical status. For example, in replying to the question *¿Estudia usted la lección?* The reply may be *Sí, señorita estudio la lección.* A few such questions may be used as standard types and employed over and over, with slight variations as to number, person, etc.

An example of this sort of classroom question-and-answer exercise is the question "What are you doing?" It may be varied to ask "What is John doing?" "What are we doing?" "What are they doing?" "What is he doing?" and so on. A wide variety of questions and answers can be formulated and exchanged within the class, centering around such a basic question.

Another type of question-and-answer exercise for the classroom is the free-for-all recitation, in which each student asks some question and other students in the class try to answer. For

convenience and better organization, it is well to limit such questions to a given topic, or to the basic vocabulary of the lesson or story of the day, in order that it will actually be possible for everyone to understand and answer the questions. Thus, the questions may be limited to the matter of location or place, and all begin with the word "Where." The answers would tell the locations of the various objects called for, and thus provide practice in using the prepositions "on," "under," "above," "beside," etc., as well as the names of numerous objects in the classroom.

Preparing and making talks. A useful type of practice in speaking is that involved in presenting a topic to the class in the form of a three-or-four-minute speech. The material for the speech may be drawn from various types of sources.

For example, a story may be read several times so that its contents have been thoroughly mastered, and then a few minutes of class time may be devoted to telling the story in the student's own words to the rest of the class.

Or, enough time may be taken to read a paragraph once or twice and then it may be sum-

marized in one's own words before the class, in the foreign language, of course.

Again, it may be well for each student to choose a topic upon which to prepare and give a short talk to the class, but without announcing the name of the topic to the group. After the talk has been finished different members of the class may be encouraged to guess the title or subject which the speaker had in mind for his talk.

A somewhat more elaborate device for the same purpose is the formal debate, in which students take sides and present the arguments for their respective positions.

Dramatization. To present a dialogue, or to dramatize a scene from a play, is a good form of speaking practice, because along with the effort to act out the idea in the form of bodily movements there is also a strong tendency to make the speaking as natural and spontaneous as possible. For example, two students may act as partners and dramatize a meeting between two friends in a hotel in a foreign city. The effort to extend the proper greetings, and to convey the attitude of surprise and delight at the unexpected meeting, will be translated into the inflection or expression of the voice as well as

into bodily movements, and will go far toward breaking up the usual habits of stilted and expressionless speech.

“Conversation day” in the classroom. A rather enjoyable type of classroom activity in which the students of foreign language classes sometimes engage is that of setting aside one day in the week for nothing but foreign language conversation. A class chairman may be chosen and a topic for discussion selected in advance. Each student has plenty of opportunity to prepare questions and remarks to present to the group, and to get ready for questions and statements which others may present. Forfeits may be required of students who find themselves obliged to resort to English in order to reply. Some suggestions regarding suitable forfeits include the presentation of a song, a speech, or a poem to the class at the next meeting.

Conversation with other students of the class outside of class hours. A very useful and enjoyable custom which foreign language students may readily establish is that of greeting each other and exchanging casual conversation in the halls and on the school grounds, in the foreign language instead of in English. The language

thus becomes the equivalent of a password, or an emblem of membership in a select group, and serves as a bond of friendship and loyalty between the members of the class. Along with this wholesome and enjoyable social benefit there is the very important by-product of gaining skill and self-confidence in speaking the language.

If this practice is carried a little further, so that fellow students take a few minutes each day for conversation and oral practice in pairs or in small groups, the work of the class period itself will be very greatly aided and supplemented.

Composing original sentences in which to use new words. In order to get a new word into one's spontaneous speaking vocabulary it is necessary to initiate it along with a group of other words, rather than simply by repeating it singly. A new word should not only be acquired, but should also be put to use. If possible, it should be used in several different sentences or several types of sentences, and each of these should be spoken enough times that a feeling of naturalness and smoothness is developed. By this method the speech habits necessary for the use of the word get pretty well under way, and with

further practice from day to day they become well established.

Memorizing idiomatic expressions. Ability to command a large number of idioms is extremely important in speaking the language fluently. For example, the expression, "unable to see the woods for the trees," conveys the desired thought much more concisely and vividly than several sentences of the more conventional type might be able to do. If the student will pause when he meets with such an expression in the foreign language and simply commit it to memory by repeating it aloud to himself, over and over—always thinking about its meaning, of course—he will have it on hand when occasion arises later to express such an idea. This idiom will automatically "pop into his mind" without having to be forced or laboriously pieced together.

Imaginary conversations. The student can do a great deal to improve his speaking ability by carrying on imaginary conversations while walking to school or while going through the halls between classes, etc. For example, he may direct a person to a certain building on the campus or explain to the teacher why he is glad he enrolled in the course. At meal time he may think how

the conversation would sound if it were conducted in the foreign language; in dressing he may say to himself in the language, "I am putting on my shoe," "I am tying my shoe," "My shoe is on," "It is tied," "Both shoes are on," etc.

Special drills on certain forms. Some constructions in a foreign language are much more difficult to use correctly than others; they should, therefore, be given much more than ordinary emphasis. Learning a foreign language is similar in this respect to memorizing an English poem. After the whole poem has been repeated several times it may be possible to remember all of it except a certain rather difficult stanza. To go over the whole poem six more times in order to clear up this one difficult stanza would be a wasteful method of study. It would be better to concentrate on this one stanza for five or six repetitions, and then to go over the entire poem once or twice in order to knit it together as a whole. Likewise, in a foreign language, it is well to practice until the parts of unusual difficulty begin to appear, and then to take time for a concentrated period of oral drill on those selected phases in order to bring them to the level of the other parts. For example, if the ob-

ject pronoun offers difficulty, it may be well to practice such exercises as "Mary has the book," "She has it," John has it," "We have the pens," "They have them," etc.

Affiliating with persons who speak the language. There are various methods of making contacts with people to whom the foreign language may be spoken. Joining foreign language clubs and living in foreign language houses are among the best of these. Students sometimes find it helpful to exchange lessons with foreign students, giving English lessons in exchange for lessons in the foreign language. It is sometimes possible to secure a native of the foreign country as a conversational partner, for an hour or two a day and at a small cost, and thus to get abundant practice in speaking, coupled with a high quality of criticism of one's speech.

The importance of practicing speaking to different persons. Just as it is necessary to listen to a variety of voices in order to be a master of the art of understanding a spoken language, so it is necessary to practice speaking to a variety of listeners in order to become a good speaker. If all one's oral practice were done with the teacher as the listener, there would be consider-

able difficulty encountered later in trying to make oneself understood by others.

Let us illustrate in terms of a small child. He learns to speak the English language in the home, and finds that his parents can understand his childish babble. He therefore continues to talk "baby talk" and to use a crude sort of English until he begins to come into contact with others who cannot make the necessary allowances for his shortcomings, and who simply do not know what he means by many of his crude approximations to English words. A foreign language student must constantly beware of falling into this error. His teacher and his fellow classmates are in a position comparable to that of the child's parents, and he will have to make contacts with others who use the language before he will be able to eliminate all of his foreign language mannerisms and "baby talk," as it were.

Oral reading as practice in speaking. A student who seriously desires to master the foreign language can accomplish much along this line simply by devoting an hour or two a day to oral reading. It is well to get a book of fairly easy material and to read aloud to oneself, for about

fifteen or twenty minutes at a time, and three or four times a day. The length of the practice period may be increased, after a few weeks, because the vocal organs will have become better adapted to the language and will not be so readily fatigued. Even then, however, the practice ordinarily will be worth more if distributed over several periods in a day than if concentrated in one long period. The material chosen may be read two or three times until a feeling of satisfaction and mastery has been acquired, after which it is better to take up a new piece for further practice.

It is better to devote the oral reading to material which is understood than to entirely new or difficult material, because the proper expression cannot be given to the reading unless the meaning is perfectly clear. For this reason, devoting time to oral reading of meaningless material may do even more harm than good because it cultivates habits of stilted and monotonous expression.

A good plan for oral reading practice is to read occasionally to someone else who understands the language, and have him give criticisms of the reading. Such a partner may be of con-

siderable help, even though he is not a master of the language himself. For example, two students of equal ability may read to each other with profit if the listener will demand that the reader put such expression into his reading as will make the meaning clear. There is some advantage in having a listener who does not already know enough about the language to be able to make allowances for imperfect reading.

Standards of perfection and of accuracy in speech practice. Some students have difficulty in speaking the language at all because of their fear of making mistakes. They let excellent opportunities pass because they are afraid someone will hear them misuse a word. If a student never speaks the language until he is a master of it, he will never speak it at all. It is to be expected that errors will occur and that incorrect usages will be indulged in. Nevertheless, the student should go ahead and express himself in the best way he can, however imperfectly that may be, and then try to improve on this by eliminating errors and substituting correct forms.

In this respect, one learns a language very much in the same way as a child learns to draw. The child cannot draw a perfect picture of a sun-

set or a meadow when he first starts to school. He may even find it difficult to draw a picture of a tree. Yet he begins by drawing some kind of tree, however imperfect it may be, and then refines his technique little by little until he attains a high degree of mastery. The foreign language student will have to proceed in somewhat the same way.

It is well not to undertake forms of expression which are extremely difficult or complicated, and which are practically certain to result in error; it is necessary, however, to say something and not to wait in silence for development of the ability to speak perfectly.

Thought versus form. In order to speak a language rapidly and fluently it is necessary that the major attention be devoted to the thought, rather than to the words or to the grammatical form in which the thought is clothed. This is simply one of the applications of the well-known principle of acquiring skill which is usually stated in the form, "Give attention to the result rather than the process." If the mechanics of speech occupy the center of the attention, the speaking is almost certain to be slow, halting, and disjointed.

Simplicity of practice material as a desirable asset. In practicing for speaking ability it is preferable to limit the efforts to fairly short sentences which are free from elaborate grammatical complexities, until the more advanced stages of speaking ability have been developed. To undertake a form of expression that is too ambitious or too complex has two disadvantages:

(1) It tends to slow down the speaking and thinking process, and to encourage the practice of solving puzzles instead of speaking naturally and fluently.

(2) It tempts to error and incorrect usage, and thus tends toward the formation of habits which interfere with correct speech.

If an idea is to be expressed which calls for elaborate or complex sentence structure or difficult grammatical forms, it is usually possible to simplify the thought a bit and to express it in two or three smaller and simpler sentences, instead of one long and complex one.

The rate of speaking. Quality of speech is much more important than quantity in the early stages of the study. It is decidedly preferable to speak slowly and accurately than to speak rapidly and make many errors. Speaking

the language is comparable in this respect to learning typewriting. The fewer the errors made in the early stages of practice, the greater the ultimate speed that will be developed after the rudiments have been mastered. Speaking slowly allows more time for thought as to what is to be said and how it is to be said, and also allows the muscles of the vocal organs to assume their proper positions and to operate under more perfect coördination and control.

What has been said in favor of slow speech in the beginning stages should not, however, be applied to the more advanced stages. It is necessary that a higher speed be developed eventually in order that speaking may take place at the normal rate. As soon as the rudiments have been mastered, therefore, an effort should be made to speed up the speaking process to the normal rate and make it more natural.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What are the advantages of the question type of material for practice in speaking a language?
2. What advantages and what limitations attach to the prepared speech, as contrasted with ordinary conversational practice in speaking a language?

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3. What are the particular merits of dramatization that are not possessed by other forms of speech practice?
4. Of what value is the memorizing of poems and proverbs as an aid to speaking?
5. To what extent is it desirable to let oral reading be used as a substitute for practice in the free speaking of the language?
6. What should be the attitude of the student toward the making of errors in his oral use of a language?
7. How rapidly should the student attempt to speak the foreign language? Why?

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CHAPTER VIII

READING

We shall consider the topic of foreign language reading under two main heads. The first is What to read, and the second, How to read.

I. WHAT TO READ

The selection of reading matter for the study of a foreign language should be governed by a number of important principles, since greater progress and benefit will be derived from some types of reading than others. The following criteria, standards, and types of reading matter are among the elements to be desired in a program of reading.

Connected rather than disconnected material.

First of all, it is important that practice in reading a foreign language be done by means of connected paragraphs or chapters, rather than by the use of disconnected and unrelated sentences. It is doubtful if the student will ever make much progress in learning to read if his efforts are

confined to such disconnected material as the following:

We have many books.
Are they in Berlin?
Where is the basket?
Did the student like his teacher?
How much money do you have?
Etc.

Such disconnected sentences hinder the development of reading ability for two reasons:

(1) They are very uninteresting and, therefore, discourage progress.

(2) They do not permit getting the thought from the context as well as connected paragraphs do, and thus make more necessary the resort to translation and the use of dictionaries.

One of the reasons why such exercises are frequently employed is that they can be so constructed as to present only one grammatical difficulty at a time, and thus lessen the difficulty for the learner by this simplification. In reality, however, it may be a deceptive type of study, and yield a false feeling of success. The use of connected paragraphs and stories will involve a representative sampling of all the various types of grammatical usages and make necessary the learning of all these at once, but such a method

in the end is likely to allow for greater progress than the opposite method. This is simply an application of the psychological principle that it is better to learn a complicated process as a whole than to learn the parts separately and try to combine them later.

Natural rather than artificial reading matter.

Many elementary foreign language books contain considerable material which was written especially for the lessons, rather than for normal reading audiences. This is done in order to limit a particular exercise to the use of a certain tense, mood, or declension, or to provide intensive drill on some particular type of construction. Such reading exercises have much in their favor, and undoubtedly serve a useful purpose. They should not, however, be allowed to crowd out reading matter of a less artificial type.

There should be at least occasional reading of material that was not intended for students at all, but rather for natives of the foreign country. The reading of natural material will serve as a corrective for such misconceptions or erroneous ideas as may be built up by the reading of the special type of material that has been mentioned. The textbook writer, particularly if he is greatly

interested in grammar, may write unnatural and non-typical sentences and paragraphs. They may be grammatically correct, and yet not possess the flavor or style characteristic of the foreign country.

Practical or everyday material. It is very important that a considerable amount of reading be devoted to something other than the strictly literary or highest type of creative writing. The language of the street, the store, the factory, and the home may be quite different from that of the poem, the play, and the novel. Probably one of the best sources of everyday practical reading matter is the foreign language newspaper or magazine. The journalistic style is not absolutely typical of the language, but in general its vocabulary is extremely practical, and its general tone is more democratic than that of the great national epics and the literary classics.

Reading matter rich in idioms and colloquial uses. If the aim of the student is to develop ability to speak and understand the foreign language, it is well for him to select, for at least part of his reading, the kind of material which is richest in colloquial expressions and the common idioms of the language. Since the drama is

written to be staged, it is particularly rich in these expressions. Next to the drama for this purpose would come the conversational portions of novels.

Portrayal of the spirit of the foreign land and its people. The reading matter that is chosen should, at least in part, be such as will present a clear and truthful picture of the manners, customs, ideals, and aspirations of the people who speak the language. Such reading matter is to be found in the great novels, dramas, and poems of that nation, as well as in the lives of its great leaders and in selections from its history. Current newspapers and magazines published in the foreign country also go far in this direction, since they give the present viewpoints and national ideals more truthfully than do the great writings of previous periods.

Ease and simplicity of reading matter. It is better to begin with reading material that is too simple and easy than with material which is too mature. It is unwise to rush too soon into advanced types of reading matter. It is necessary to confine the reading to simpler and more elementary material than would be read in English.

It is preferable to select material which has a

low ratio of new words to words previously learned, so that the vocabulary problem will not be serious. Such a story as *The House That Jack Built*, involving as it does a great deal of repetition of words and sentences, is particularly good from this standpoint.

Fairy tales and stories for children make splendid foreign language reading material, even for adults. We all enjoy the relaxation involved in reading these simple stories. Furthermore, since the stories themselves are probably familiar to the reader through previous contact in English, reading is much easier and more enjoyable. There is keen satisfaction in being able to decipher such a story in the foreign language and to recognize actions or events which were recalled from previous reading of the English versions. The same is true of reading foreign language editions of the Bible, particularly if the student has become very familiar with the English Bible.

Interest. Whatever may be the other desirable qualities possessed by a reading selection, it should by all means possess the quality of interest. Little progress is made in reading a language unless what is read possesses some genuine and

really satisfying interest. There should be plenty of life and sparkle, with occasional touches of humor or pathos, or a sufficiently intriguing plot to grip and hold the interest from the very start. There are foreign language reading books which contain the greatest stories the world has ever known, including gripping stories of the adventures of legendary heroes as well as the accounts of purely fictitious characters.

Hence, there is no justification for plugging away stolidly trying to learn a language by reading dry-as-dust material without any human appeal. Foreign language reading should be similar to the reading of English literature in this respect. It should be enjoyable and satisfying in itself, and should not have to be read with such ulterior motives as the desire for a high mark.

Variety. The reading matter used in language study should possess considerable variety, for more than one reason.

In the first place, variety adds interest and thus makes possible the further pursuit of reading.

Secondly, different types of reading matter convey different messages and enrich the reader's experience in many ways. There is as much

reason for reading several types of foreign language literature as there is for distributing one's reading of English literature over a wider range than, for example, novels dealing with aviation.

Thirdly, each author has a different style and a different vocabulary. Consequently, after having become acquainted with one author it may be well to change to a new one in order to secure a greater amount of vocabulary development. It is a common observation that a new book is more difficult to read than the one that was just finished, and also that the last of a book always seems easier than its beginning. This is because the student becomes acquainted with the style and vocabulary of the author during the reading of the book, and must make his adjustment to a new style and a new vocabulary on beginning a work by another author. The policy of sticking to one author through several books may be preferable in that it is easier and, therefore, more enjoyable, but it yields a one-sided knowledge of the language.

Length of reading units. Four points should be mentioned in connection with the length of the selection for reading:

- (1) The selection should be longer than the

sentence. We have already made the point that connected paragraphs are preferable to individual sentence units.

(2) The selection should not be so long that the student will be unable to finish it, nor so long that he will have forgotten the beginning before he reaches the end. Nothing is so discouraging as to undertake the reading of a foreign language book and laboriously plod through the story without reaching the end, or ever learning what happened to the hero, the heroine, and the other characters.

(3) Jokes and anecdotes are good units for the beginner, where shortness and completeness are essential.

(4) The more advanced student may find it preferable to read novels, dramas, or fairly long units in preference to reading a collection of anecdotes and very short stories. This is because of the fact that once he gets interested in a novel it is difficult to quit until he finishes it. Thus the interest is continuous and cumulative. In the reading of short selections, on the other hand, the interest drops back to the zero point at the end of each unit, and it is more difficult

to start the second short story than it is to start the second chapter of a novel.

II. HOW TO READ

Having considered the problem of selecting reading material, we are now ready to give our attention to principles concerning the method of reading. The following are suggestions derived from the experience of successful students and teachers of foreign languages.

Reading for thought instead of reading for word units. The primary consideration in reading must be that of getting the thought. Interpretation should take place with the sentence rather than with the word as the thought unit. The meaning of the story or paragraph should be paramount, rather than the meaning of the individual words. To the beginner, word order in the foreign language sentence appears to be very badly jumbled up. For example, a verb may be at the beginning or the end rather than in the middle of the sentence, and adjectives may follow rather than precede the nouns they modify. If the reading is progressing by word units, these differences of arrangement may rob the sentence almost entirely of its meaning. The attitude of

the reader should be that the words are simply processes and that the meaning is the result, and he should, therefore, aim primarily at the result, using the process simply as a means to an end.

Avoiding looking up words during the reading process. One of the practices that is most fatal to successful reading is that of hunting up the meaning of every word encountered that is not absolutely clear. There is too much of this slavish type of literal translation in reading. Even though a particular word is meaningless when first encountered in a sentence, it may be perfectly clear upon reaching the end of the paragraph. If not, it may clear up at a second reading. If it does not clear up entirely upon further reading, the student may still be able to get a vague or partial understanding of its meaning and thus be able to interpret the paragraph as a whole reasonably well. It is possible to read in English without knowing the exact and precise meaning of every word, and the same may be done in a foreign language.

There are three suggestions which may be helpful in overcoming the tendency to look up words unnecessarily:

- (1) Practice reading material that is so easy

that the few unfamiliar words which are encountered may be explained through the context in which they appear.

(2) Practice reading newspapers in which no formal vocabularies or lists of foreign words and their English equivalents are printed.

(3) Select from the library a foreign language book which was published in the foreign country rather than one edited for American students, thus getting a book that has no foreign-English vocabulary available and none of the other notes, explanations, comments, and similar crutches upon which to lean.

Rereading passages several times. Considerable stress should be laid upon the point that it is better to read a selection over and over at the normal rate and in the normal way, than to resort to dictionaries and grammars in order to dig out the exact meaning of one sentence at a time. The first reading may seem to yield practically none of the meaning of the passage. The second may simply give a vague notion of what it is all about. In the third reading some of the simpler phases of the passage may clear up, and eventually all but a few especially difficult parts will be clear.

It may be necessary, after several readings, to resort to outside sources of help, such as dictionaries and grammars, but these should be postponed as long as possible, and used only after the bulk of the selection has been mastered through rereading. The same advantage that applies to memorizing a poem by repeating it as a whole, rather than by stanzas, is to be derived from going over the foreign language selection as a whole, rather than working it out in a problem-solving fashion, one sentence at a time.

Extensive reading. There is much to be gained by reading, in a somewhat hurried and superficial way, a large number of foreign language books instead of concentrating more thoroughly upon a few. This method of reading encourages the getting of the meaning through the context, the reading by thought units rather than word units, and the reading of the language for pleasure. If a student can overcome his conscience and break down his long-established habits of thoroughness enough to read a good novel in this way for the story, rather than as a lesson in the language, he may find it to be an enjoyable pastime and may read other novels when the first one is finished.

Few students ever accomplish this result, however, because they have a mistaken conviction that there is something dishonest or immoral about passing by anything which is not absolutely and completely understood. As a matter of fact, this policy of superficial and extensive study is likely to result in greater thoroughness in the end than the opposite policy, because it will lead to pleasure reading, and thus will cause the language to be continued by the student after he leaves school.

Intensive reading. What has just been said regarding extensive reading should not be taken as an unqualified condemnation of intensive reading. There are times when absolute accuracy and precision are essential, and when a vague or indefinite notion of the meaning of a paragraph might even be worse than useless. For example, an advanced student reading a language in connection with a research project must not be content with a vague and approximate grasp of the meaning, because the whole point of his study may hinge upon some of the more subtle technicalities. It is necessary, therefore, to learn how to delve deeper into a paragraph and dig out its hidden meaning when occasion demands. Exten-

sive reading and intensive reading in the foreign language may be compared, in a sense, to reading in English and studying or problem-solving in English.

Reading aloud. The relation between oral and silent reading in the foreign language is not quite the same as that between oral and silent reading in English. In English, silent reading is considerably more efficient than oral, and for most purposes is to be preferred to it. In the foreign language, however, the student is not so well developed in the art of getting the meaning, and frequently is able to understand what he reads more effectively if he says the words than if he simply reads them silently. This is particularly true if the study of the language has been carried out along the line of the direct method, in which words are learned orally before they are seen in print.

Oral reading also constitutes good practice in speaking, particularly if it is accompanied by an effort to read with the proper expression. There are limitations to oral reading, however, in that it may at times take the attention away from the thought and put it upon the calling of words,

and also in that oral reading is slower than silent reading.

Possibly the whole point can be summarized by saying that reading aloud is likely to be a help in the early stages of the study of a language, but that silent reading is likely to be preferable when the student has reached an advanced stage somewhat comparable to his ability to read English.

Reading as an avenue to new experiences.

Reading in a foreign language, just as in English, may be thought of as an exercise designed to develop reading ability, and also as an avenue to the securing of new ideas, information, and experience. The student should try as early as possible to reach the point at which his reading will serve the second of these two purposes, rather than merely the first. In other words, as early as possible he should shift his attention from the reading process to the reading content. His reading of the foreign language should pass from the stage comparable to that of an elementary school pupil to the stage represented by the reading done by students in such school subjects as history, science, or literature.

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QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Give as many reasons as you can to show why reading matter in a foreign language should be of the connected type.
2. What are the merits and demerits of reading matter that has been specially devised by the textbook writer?
3. What is the difference between newspaper material and the great literary classics in regard to their value as reading material for the student?
4. Illustrate as many different ways as you can by which variety may be secured in the reading matter used.
5. Give as many advantages as you can which attach to the novel or long literary unit, as contrasted with the short story or brief unit of reading material.
6. How can the reader bring himself to pay more attention to the thought than to reading by word units?
7. What should be the attitude of the student toward passing over words whose meaning he does not fully comprehend?
8. What are the relative merits of oral and silent reading in foreign language study?

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CHAPTER IX

WRITING

The amount of attention to be given to writing the foreign language should depend upon the kind of ability sought, and the purpose for which the language is to be learned. Since writing is slow, and allows plenty of time to look up words or to think through the problems of grammatical structure, it affords a good training in precision and correctness of use, but it may at the same time cultivate habits which interfere with ability to speak the language. If the major part of a student's study of a language is devoted to written exercises, he forms the habit of relying upon grammar rules and dictionary definitions of words, instead of upon his own automatic habits of expression. For this reason it is important that written exercises should not replace oral practice, but merely supplement it. This chapter contains suggestions furnished by experienced students and teachers of the languages regarding the use of written methods of study.

Answering questions versus translating sen-

tences. There is much to be said in favor of written exercises containing questions in the foreign language to which the student is to frame answers of his own in the foreign language. This type of exercise is to be contrasted with that in which a sentence is presented in the English language for the student to translate into the foreign tongue. The ability to answer the question not only insures an understanding of the meaning of the question, but it also makes it possible to carry on the work by thinking in the foreign language instead of by translating. It yields practically the same type of grammatical training as is afforded by translating English sentences, and at the same time develops facility in the free and natural use of the language. A very good setting for such a written exercise is in connection with a story or selection of reading material. After such material has been read, a number of questions may be answered based upon the contents.

Writing from dictation. The task of writing a foreign language consists, in part, of the mechanics of spelling, separation of words, and distinguishing on paper between sounds which are very much alike to the ear. Writing from dic-

tation is, therefore, a good method of practice to develop this type of ability. A great deal of this is commonly done in the foreign language classroom, the teacher dictating the material while all students in the class copy it. The student, however, can carry out additional practice of the same type by arranging for someone to dictate to him outside of class hours. Such dictation exercises are good because they involve the use of several senses in learning, and because they do not allow an opportunity to dodge one's writing difficulties by passing up words or expressions which are difficult to spell. They are also preferable to answering printed questions, in one sense, because there are no written models to imitate.

Reproduction of reading matter in one's own words. Having finished the reading of a selection in the foreign language, the student may put the book away and write from memory, in sentences of his own construction, the principal thoughts of the passage. This type of written exercise has the advantage of offering something to write and of supplying a good model or pattern to imitate, and at the same time forcing the student to use his own wits in putting the ideas gained

into connected form. It also has the merit of preventing the wholesale dodging of linguistic difficulties, because there is a fixed body of content to express which cannot be changed at will. If the reproduction of the story is not true to the original, the distortion is immediately obvious. The student is, therefore, obliged to surmount his major difficulties and work out a written composition which accurately and thoughtfully expresses the basic ideas presented in the reading selection.

Original compositions. There are merits and demerits in the practice of writing original compositions. The principal limitation of this type of study is that it allows too much freedom to dodge language difficulties. For example, if the student undertakes to write a story about a horse race and does not know the word for horse, he may overcome this difficulty by telling about a theater party. A great deal of this sort of adjustment takes place in the writing of original compositions, with the result that there is a lack of development along new lines and a lack of mastery of new types of usage. In fact, a student could go for months without using the sub-

junctive mood if all of his written work were limited to free composition.

On the other hand, there is much to be said in favor of original composition if it is properly done. It is usually more interesting than more rigidly controlled exercises, and tends to give a feeling of mastery and real achievement in the language. For this reason, the study of the language may well include the writing of stories on selected topics, writing letters to real or imaginary persons, writing poetry to be read in class, writing playlets for the language group, etc.

Reading as a preparation for writing. Reading of the extensive and intensive types furnishes a splendid preparation or foundation for composition work. It not only affords good models of form and style to imitate but also supplies material or ideas which may be used as the basis for written work. Most important of all, it yields a rich vocabulary so that the writer has more words from which to choose when he attempts to express ideas. To write a theme in the foreign language upon a subject that has already become very familiar through reading is a much more interesting and worth-while process than

to undertake to put into the language a large number of miscellaneous sentences involving many new and unrelated words.

Writing the composition in English, and then translating it into the foreign language. A method which students are frequently tempted to employ in composition work is to compose the theme in English, and then convert it into the foreign language. This has three advantages:

(1) It is likely to lead to the learning of a number of new words and grammatical usages which would not be acquired by the other plan. For example, the English version of the theme may involve the use of the subjunctive mood without the student's being aware of it. When he comes to put it into the foreign language, therefore, he finds it necessary to learn or review the subjunctive mood.

(2) For the same reason it enlarges vocabulary, because many English words will be used for which the student does not have readily available equivalents.

(3) This method discourages changing the theme in order to dodge difficulties. If the entire composition has been written in English, and difficulties are encountered in putting it into the

foreign language, the changing of the thought in one part is likely to upset the organization of the theme as a whole, and is, therefore, not feasible.

This method of writing a theme is opposed to the objective of learning to think in the foreign language, and should be used with caution and moderation. It also is likely to result in an awkward and unnatural type of expression, because English thoughts are translated into foreign words with considerable difficulty by the beginner. The plan of composing the theme in the foreign language at first allows freedom of expression and allows more spontaneity than is possible in the case of translation.

Polishing up the composition. Written work in the foreign language offers a much greater opportunity for polish and perfection than does oral work. What is spoken must be spoken at once, and there is no time to pause and to revise. On the other hand, a written composition will wait for hours or days, and may be subjected to as much intensive work as the student may desire to devote to it.

The polishing up and revising of a theme should consist of two main types of work:

(1) It should involve the correction of errors of grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc., so that it is as nearly perfect in these mechanics as the student can make it.

(2) In addition to the revision of the mechanics there is the revision and polishing as regards the style and the artistic qualities. The careful student will attempt to convert his ordinary, matter-of-fact writing into idiomatic and artistic form. Frequently the finished product may be very different from the first prosaic and uncouth efforts.

Assembling ideas to be used in writing. After selecting a subject for a theme, it is well to spend some time listing words or expressions which are to be used in developing the topic. These may be jotted down in miscellaneous order, just as they come into the mind. The process should be carried on as long as new ideas or words can be thought of, and when no further items suggest themselves the list may be reviewed for additional suggestions.

For example, if the Spanish student desires to write a little theme about a classroom occurrence, he may begin by recording such words as *el maestro*, *los alumnos*, *una alumna*, *el muchacho*, *la niña*, *Juan*,

Enrique, la mesa, la pizarra, la tiza, etc. After having written down forty or fifty such key words, each representing something related to the incident described, the actual writing of the theme may proceed without a shortage of ideas to serve as raw material.

Organizing before writing. In foreign languages, as in English, it is preferable to plan a composition before writing it. What was said in the previous paragraph regarding the listing of the ideas to be employed in the theme may be considered as the first step in the organization of the theme. All of the items mentioned may be written on small cards or slips of paper that may be very easily rearranged by sorting into piles, according to the order in which they are to be treated in the paper, and thus be made to yield a logical and systematic outline before the actual writing has begun. Such a method of writing produces a paper which not only expresses individual ideas or thoughts, but which also carries out some one major message for the composition as a whole. This is decidedly preferable to the hit-or-miss plan of writing the first sentence that comes into mind, and then casting about for another sentence to add to it.

Proof-reading. Every piece of written work

should be carefully read after it is finished. A large percentage of the mistakes made by the average student is due to carelessness and oversight, and could be eliminated very easily if sufficient time were taken to examine the paper, thoughtfully and critically before handing it in. There should be no necessity for the teacher to mark a paper because the student forgot to cross his t's or put question marks at the ends of questions.

The distaste for proof-reading is a natural one, because one is ordinarily tired and somewhat bored by the time he completes a written exercise, and would very much prefer never to see it or think of it again, just as the student who has finished an examination paper in English prefers to hand his paper in without reading it over. This distaste for proof-reading must be overcome, however, because it is not fair to the teacher to ask her to read papers which the student was too lazy to finish, and also because the necessity of correcting such routine errors may prevent the teacher from giving as much time and attention as is needed to the errors of a more fundamental sort.

The criticism of written work. It is very im-

portant that written work be examined critically and errors corrected in order that making the same mistake a second time may be avoided. Foreign language teachers ordinarily spend a considerable amount of time in such criticism of written work. In fact, they ordinarily give more time in rendering this type of service to their students than the students are able to appreciate. The student's attitude toward a paper which is returned with red marks should be one of appreciation and gratitude, rather than annoyance. Furthermore, the proper forms should be written for the parts which were wrong, in order to impress more vividly upon the mind the proper usages and to eradicate the false associations which were previously formed.

Students can do much to help each other by exchanging papers and correcting each other's mistakes. After this is done, the papers should be returned to their owners, the corrections discussed, and, in cases of doubt, debated and justified.

Exchanging letters with foreign students. A type of writing which is productive of several kinds of benefit is that of engaging in correspondence with students of English in foreign

countries. For example, the teacher may be able to make contact with some teacher of English in France, Spain, or Germany, as the case may be, who will give the names of the individual members of his class. Each student in the class then chooses an individual boy or girl in the foreign country with whom to correspond. The letters may be sent individually, or letters from all students in the class may be forwarded in one envelope and distributed to the members of the foreign class by the teacher abroad.

It is customary for the student to write to the foreign student in the foreign language, and to receive the reply in English. This gives an opportunity for each member of the pair to criticize and correct the mistakes of the other, and it also affords a very strong motive for writing correctly, since the writer knows that his mistakes will be noticed and will probably appear ridiculous to the student in the foreign country.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What are the peculiar problems and difficulties involved in writing a language which do not appear in other types of study?

2. How does writing from dictation compare in value with writing a free composition?
3. What advantages attach to paraphrasing or reproducing in one's own words the general idea of what has been read?
4. What should be the student's attitude toward the policy of writing out a composition in English, and then turning it into the foreign language?
5. How does the planning of the composition in the foreign language resemble, and how differ from, planning one in English?
6. Give as many reasons as you can why foreign language writing should receive more careful proof-reading than an English composition.
7. What are the difficulties and handicaps which attach to correspondence with pupils in a foreign country?

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CHAPTER X

TRANSLATION

We shall consider the subject of translation in this chapter under two main divisions, as follows: (1) Nature, values, and limitations, (2) Methods.

I. NATURE, VALUES, AND LIMITATIONS

In learning our native language we have no other associations with English words than the objects or ideas which they represent. We naturally learn to think in the language, for we have no other vehicles for thought. This is not true, however, in learning a foreign language. Having already built up the means of communication through our native tongue, we find it difficult not to use English as the interpreter for the foreign language. Consequently, in reading in the foreign language we tend to interpret the meaning of foreign words by reference to English words. Likewise, in attempting to use the foreign language we are inclined to think in English, and then to try to find the foreign equiva-

lents with which to express our thoughts. This process of turning one language into the other is called translation.

Values of translation. There are numerous benefits to be derived, and numerous purposes to be served, through the use of translation. Some of these are as follows:

(1) Translation is more conducive to learning a foreign language without a teacher than are some of the other methods, because the student can look up the words he does not know and get the meaning for himself without a teacher present to point out the objects or dramatize the actions while speaking the foreign words.

(2) Translation is often economical of time because it is frequently very difficult to explain or to grasp the meaning of a word or expression in the foreign language itself, but extremely easy to get the meaning if the English word is available.

(3) Translation is a good method of enriching the foreign vocabulary. Upon thinking of certain words, expressions, or sentences in English there is a natural tendency to translate them into the foreign language. If the appropriate foreign words are not all known, the effort to

translate from English will encourage the learning of the new words, and thus add them to the vocabulary that is already possessed. Without the practice of translating, however, there would not be this same challenge for enlarging the vocabulary or acquiring certain new words.

(4) Translation enriches English vocabulary in very much the same way as it enriches foreign vocabulary. That is, when translating from the foreign language to English there is the same motive for looking up unfamiliar English words to express foreign ideas as we have just mentioned in connection with the looking up of foreign words when translating the other way.

(5) Translating brings to the foreground of attention the parallels and similarities between two languages to a much greater extent than do the more direct methods of study. Thus, if an English word is related to a French word through some process of derivation from Latin, the effort to translate from French to English or from English to French is much more likely to lead to the discovery of the kinship between the words than almost any other method by which the languages could be studied.

(6) Translation brings out the subtle dis-

tinctions between words in a manner and to an extent seldom accomplished by other methods. Frequently a given foreign word can be translated into English by the use of as many as twenty or thirty different English words. These English words are by no means exact equivalents of the foreign word, and in fact there may be no English word at all which exactly expresses the idea of the foreign one. The process of picking and choosing the best word out of a large number of approximations is a splendid influence in the cultivation of the ability to express the exact shade of meaning one has in mind.

(7) Translation serves as a test of one's mastery of the foreign language. It is much more of an exact science than is reading for the thought without translating, and it provides a much more tangible and objective check upon or measure of the success achieved. It is considerably more difficult to bluff in translating than in some of the other methods of studying a language.

(8) Translation ability is extremely important in the cases of those few students of foreign languages who use their knowledge of the language for the purpose of acting as interpreters. This use of translation, however, does not apply

very often to the average student in high school or college.

(9) Translation makes it possible for foreign language scholars to make available to English-speaking people the rich and valuable treasures of foreign literature and scientific writings. Many of the best foreign publications have been translated and published in English, and can be read without special training by millions of people who would probably never be able to read them otherwise. A student who is very ambitious may look forward to the day when he will be able to render such a service to his fellow men through translating foreign books into the English language.

Limitations and disadvantages of translation.

The translation method of studying is not without its drawbacks. Some of these are as follows:

(1) It tends to obstruct the direct association between the foreign word and the idea. It tends to slow down the thought process by making it go by way of English instead of directly from the foreign word to the idea. It interferes with thinking in the foreign language and is thus a handicap to ultimate progress. This may not seem to be a serious drawback in the early

stages of language study because at that time it may actually be easier and quicker to resort to English than to form direct associations, but in the later stages of study the ability to make the direct associations is very important, and an overemphasis on translation may prevent such direct associations.

(2) Accurate translation is sometimes impossible. Many words, sentences, or paragraphs cannot be translated without changing the thought or losing something of the original style, flavor, or force of the author. This is true, particularly, in the translation of poetry and literary masterpieces. The translator may express the same basic thoughts but probably not with the richness, beauty, and subtlety of style characteristic of the original.

(3) It is likely to be a dull and uninteresting method of study. When used exclusively, day after day, the translation method often fails to hold the student's interest and attention. It is likely to become a monotonous process of searching for equivalent words, and thus to degenerate into a mere routine. The superior student, however, may keep it on a higher plane than this if he tries sufficiently hard.

(4) It is wasteful of time. The average foreign language student in using a translation method spends an enormous amount of time in looking up words. In many cases these words will not be retained except long enough to put them into the sentence that is being translated, and they have to be looked up again and again as they recur in the daily lessons. In addition to this waste of time in translating, there is another disadvantage that is possibly more important. It is the slowing up of the reading rate. A student who reads the language without translating can proceed at approximately the same rate as he reads in English, because the eyes can move straight along the line without the necessity of regressive movements to go back and connect subject and verb or to rearrange the sentence into English order. The translation makes it impossible to progress evenly and continuously along the line, and thus it slows up reading. Translation also slows the reading rate because for each individual word that is translated there are three thought processes instead of two. These are recognition of the identity of the foreign word, recalling the corresponding English word, and finally formulating the idea. Reading with-

out translation omits this middle step and thus permits the process to go on more rapidly.

(5) It tends to subordinate the thought or content of what is read to the mechanics or technique of word manipulation. In the rush of looking up words, students often forget that they are translating thoughts and ideas. The attention is frequently given to manipulation of the smaller units of thought embodied in individual words rather than to the larger current of thought running through the paragraph or the chapter.

Translating into English versus translating from English. There are two distinctly different types of translation that are possible in foreign language study. One is that of translating a foreign language into English, the other is translating English into the foreign tongue. Let us consider for a moment the purposes and values of each.

Translating the foreign language into English is very commonly used as a method of checking up on the understanding of the foreign language. It is a good test of the mastery of vocabulary, as well as of grammatical rules. Its values and educational contributions are two-fold:

(1) It is a method of learning to get the meaning from the printed page, as contrasted with developing the ability to write or speak.

(2) It is an unusually good method of enlarging the English vocabulary.

The reason for this second statement is that when a student translates from a foreign tongue into English he is obliged to hunt for the English word that expresses the shade of meaning conveyed by the foreign term. If this English word is not a standard unit in his present vocabulary, it tends to become so. If the objective is to increase English vocabulary, it is decidedly preferable to translate from the foreign language into the English, instead of from English into the foreign language.

Translating from English into the foreign language is designed to serve two major purposes. The first is to develop ability to speak or to write the foreign language, as contrasted with the ability to read or to understand it, and the second is to enlarge the foreign vocabulary. Just as translation into English enlarges English vocabulary, so translation into the foreign language tends to enlarge the foreign vocabulary.

II. METHODS

We shall now consider some of the practical suggestions offered by students and teachers of foreign languages looking toward the development of efficiency in translation.

Translation as the last, rather than the first step in studying the selection. Many students attempt to translate a selection before they have made the proper basic preparations. They start in to translate the first sentence before having read the succeeding sentences, or, which is worse, they translate the first word of the sentence before reading the sentence as a whole. This makes it impossible for them to have the perspective and background necessary for intelligent translation. The preparation for translating from the foreign language into English should consist first of one or two preliminary readings to obtain a general idea of the content; otherwise the translation will be a mere manipulation of words. After such a reading, a second type of preparation that may be required is the study of a few of the difficult grammatical forms which are presented in the selection. After such preliminary study, it is possible to begin the translation in

earnest, and with a sense of mastery of the situation as a whole.

In translating from English into the foreign language, a study of grammatical difficulties may be required, as well as a careful reading of the English material in order to be sure of the exact meaning that is to be imparted in the foreign language. The next step may then be to summarize the English material in an approximate way, using foreign language of one's own choosing. After having thus paraphrased or summarized the material, and thus caused it to register in his foreign language mental set, the student is next ready to complete the process by drawing up an exact and accurate foreign language translation. In other words, the translation should finish rather than begin the study process.

Translating for thought versus translating mechanically. Words are not nearly so important in translation as ideas. The aim is to convey the thought accurately and precisely, rather than to find a specific English word to match each foreign word. A literal translation of a foreign language is almost necessarily a highly mechanical and an extremely ineffective one. In fact, if a language is translated in this manner, the

result is usually almost meaningless. Translation should never be mere transcribing word for word. It should, on the contrary, be a process of finding parallel thoughts and expressing these in whatever English words may be required to raise the nearest possible approximation to the author's original idea in the mind of the reader.

The translator must do more, therefore, than merely read what he is going to translate as a preparation for making the translation. He must study it in addition to reading it. We use the word study here to signify grasping the general spirit and message of the material as contrasted with getting the meanings of the individual words.

It is preferable to practice translating by using very familiar material in order that the difficulty of grasping the basic meaning may be reduced, and in order that more attention may be devoted to the process of choosing suitable language in which to express it. The use of material studied in previous lessons, in preference to new material, is to be encouraged for this same reason. Meaningful translation does not result from reading a fragment and then translating it before completing the reading of the whole, be-

cause such a method almost certainly means word juggling rather than translating the thought.

Translating the same material in several different ways. Anyone who has compared two or more translations of such a masterpiece of foreign language as Goethe's *Faust*, or Homer's *Iliad*, probably has been impressed by the great amount of difference between the two versions. Likewise, different translations of the Bible vary considerably from each other. In many cases there are several different ways of translating a passage, and one is as good as the other. The foreign language student should beware of the attitude that there is one and only one correct translation for a foreign sentence. If he will translate the passage before him into two or three different forms or versions he will find frequently, on comparing them, that one is considerably smoother or more forceful and effective than the others. After having thus translated in several ways and chosen the best, he will not only have a better final outcome to present to the teacher or to the publisher, but he also will have gained a new insight into the nature of the lan-

guage and the tremendous flexibility and adaptability of words, phrases, and idioms.

Translations as substitutes for the originals.

Many of the most valuable works written in foreign languages have been translated by scholars into the English language, and are readily available to those who wish to read them. The use to be made of such translations will depend upon the purpose which the student is trying to serve. If his sole aim is to acquire the information or to get the message which the original foreign author wished to convey, probably the best and most economical plan is to read an English translation of the work, because this can be done more quickly and the ideas gained will probably be more clear than if the original is read. There is little virtue in laboriously translating for oneself a work which someone has previously translated and published in English unless the reason is to acquire skill in translating.

It is possible that in using foreign authors as sources of information the student may learn some things through direct contact with the original that would not be learned through published translations. On the other hand, he would

ordinarily spend more time in studying the originals than would be required to study the English translations, and would therefore be able to cover less ground and would be a loser in the long run. The point simply is that ability to translate should be considered as a constructive and a useful tool, rather than as a delightful plaything to be used merely for the using when other methods would really serve the purpose better.

The use of “ponies” in foreign language classes.

Oftentimes a student of a foreign language who does not wish to expend the necessary effort to master translation for himself will purchase a translation of the work that is being studied, and will thus attempt to dodge the difficult task of translating. This method has been commonly spoken of as “riding a pony.” Such helps ordinarily do more harm than good, and for several reasons:

(1) In the first place, they are bad because they tempt the student to learn mechanically rather than thoughtfully.

(2) In the second place, they do not result in the real mastery of words as they occur.

(3) In the third place, there is little or no

learning involved in copying or memorizing such translations.

(4) Finally, and most important of all, these "ponies" are not able to carry the student to the end of the course. They give him a false feeling of beating the game in the early stages of the course, and prevent his laying a foundation of real mastery upon which to base later work in the course, so that after a short time it comes to be extremely difficult to make progress, even with the aid of the "pony."

Home-made interlinear translations. A method of studying which is even more common and probably as undesirable as the use of a printed translation is that of writing the meanings of the words between the lines in the book to aid the memory while translating in class. There are several reasons why this is a poor method of study:

(1) Writing the meaning in the book comes to be used as a substitute for impressing it permanently upon the memory, and thus prevents increasing the size of vocabulary.

(2) Such an interlinear translation tends to be a literal or mechanical rather than a thoughtful one, and thus interferes with the develop-

ment of ultimate mastery of the translator's art.

(3) Words once written in the book tend to be regarded as final and correct rather than mere tentative suggestions as to the author's meaning, and thus interfere with arriving at a polished or finished type of translation. If a word is looked up in the dictionary and one of its meanings written down mechanically, it is highly probable that the definition that was chosen for writing is not as well suited to the particular sentence as one of the three or four other possible dictionary equivalents. If the translation process is being carried on without writing, the meanings of the words will be kept in mind in a tentative way and will be subject to change until the entire sentence has been worked out smoothly and satisfactorily. Writing down the first meaning that is found in the dictionary discourages this tentative attitude and almost certainly results in a shabby product.

(4) This method of work resembles the use of "ponies" in that it is ordinarily a dishonest procedure. In the usual class the teacher expects a student to do his work and to rely upon thinking rather than secret aids to the memory, and if a student employs these substitute methods as

a means of deceiving his teacher, he not only spoils his opportunities to learn the language effectively, but he also miseducates himself as regards moral character.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. How does translation differ from reading?
2. Prepare a list of points for a debate on one side of the question: Resolved, that translation is the most productive method of studying a foreign language.
3. In what ways does translation into English differ in its results and methods from translation into the foreign language?
4. What types of study should precede translation?
5. Explain why matching English meanings to foreign words does not result in a high grade of translation.
6. Explain why different translations which have been made of such a book as the Bible differ from one another as they do.
7. What should be the attitude of the student toward reading foreign literature that has already been translated into English?
8. Explain why a student who uses a "pony" does himself an injustice.
9. What is the psychological effect of writing the meanings of words in the book between the lines?

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CHAPTER XI

GRAMMAR

Grammar is the basic science or theory of a language. It consists of the principles and laws which govern the use of the various parts of speech. The study of grammar is, therefore, largely an intellectual pursuit as contrasted with a pursuit for the development of skills. Memory and thinking are considerably more evident in grammar study than is motor activity or emotional expression. This chapter treats some of the major considerations which enter into the study of grammar in connection with foreign languages.

Values claimed for grammar. Several reasons are advanced to explain why grammar study is beneficial in the pursuit of a foreign language. Some of these are as follows:

- (1) The study of foreign grammar contributes much to the understanding of English grammar, because it enables us to study in a critical way the same grammatical principles which we find represented in English grammar but which we

take for granted because of our greater familiarity with English. We find it very difficult at times to interest ourselves in such a topic as the subjunctive in English, but when we meet this topic in connection with a foreign language with which we are less familiar, we see for the first time the real significance of the subjunctive.

(2) Mastery of the fundamental principles of grammar in English is difficult, because English is not a very highly inflected language. Certain foreign languages, on the other hand, have a large number of different endings for nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, etc., according to their number, person, gender, case, tense, and mood, and these endings lend significance and interest to grammar study which English words frequently fail to provide.

(3) It is thought that the study of grammar frequently contributes to the effectiveness of reading comprehension in the foreign language by clearing up difficult and complex sentences which would probably not be understood otherwise. This same point is frequently mentioned as a justification for grammar in the English language also.

(4) Inasmuch as there are numerous construc-

tions or forms of language usage which follow the same patterns, it is thought to be economical to learn the grammatical rule or principle which governs all cases of a given kind, and thus to master them all at one blow instead of having to overcome each difficulty or acquire each usage as an individual task.

(5) Grammar is said to serve somewhat the same purpose in systematizing one's knowledge of the mass of details in a foreign language as a filing system serves in systematizing the records and correspondence in a business office. That is, the science of grammar reduces individual language habits and units of information to types, and classifies them into systematic and orderly form so that they can be retained and made readily available when needed.

The direct method and grammar. There is a common impression that the advocates of the direct method in foreign languages are opposed to grammar. This is not entirely true. Even the most extreme advocates of direct instruction include considerable grammar in their program of activities. They do not believe in leaving all grammar to be acquired entirely by incidental methods, such as those by which a child learns

his mother tongue. They believe that grammar should receive definite attention and systematic study, but they recommend a somewhat different approach from that commonly employed by the opponents of the direct method. They prefer not to make grammar the main thing in the study process, and they prefer to organize it upon a more psychological basis than was formerly used.

Limitations of grammar. Numerous arguments are advanced in opposition to the extreme emphasis upon grammar in the pursuit of a foreign language. Some of these are as follows:

(1) The decline of the theory of transfer of training, or mental discipline, as the major consideration in education has removed a very common and frequently offered support from grammar study. The old idea was that solving grammatical difficulties was good mental exercise, and was, therefore, highly valuable. Recent years have seen the tendency to put less faith in such arguments, and to force the advocates of grammar to find more direct advantages of the subject upon which to base their case.

(2) Grammar study in general is somewhat less interesting than more practical and direct forms of study. The grammatical approach does

not yield the student the instinctive satisfaction which oral work in the language gives. This lack of fundamental appeal is a fact of some weight.

(3) Grammar is intellectual, whereas ability to use the language is merely habit. Grammar is, therefore, in danger of failing to function, just as the science of ethics is in danger of remaining detached from the practical morality and daily conduct of the person who studies it.

(4) Grammar study is somewhat opposed to development of the ability to think in the language and to use it freely and spontaneously. The average adult who uses language naturally and fluently seldom thinks what case follows a preposition, but simply speaks automatically or from habit. It is very difficult to keep in mind the rules and principles of grammar which apply to a particular sentence, and to carry on the process fast enough for ordinary conversation. The more thought one gives to grammatical rules while he speaks, the less likely he is to speak rapidly and fluently. Furthermore, the greater the emphasis given to the study of grammar in the course, the less time there is left for attention to oral practice and the formation of language habits.

(5) There is a rather serious fallacy in the view that a language can be learned synthetically. In other words, it is doubtful whether the student who masters the entire language by parts, and tries to put these parts together into a connected whole, will ever be able to do so satisfactorily. Learning all the word and grammatical rules for the expression of a given thought, and then piecing them together into connected speech, is likely to result in many queer combinations which the native of the country would consider ridiculous. It is often better to learn a complete sentence as a whole, even without knowing the subject from the object, and then later to discover the grammatical relation of the parts, than it is to begin with all the parts and hope to put them together in the right way.

It is because of the fact that there are certain real values in grammar study, and that there are also genuine dangers and limitations involved in it, that the remaining paragraphs of this chapter are devoted to its practical aspects. Various methods have been suggested by students and teachers of foreign languages for deriving greater value from this line of work. We shall now examine some of them.

The inductive approach. Grammar should be studied inductively rather than deductively. It should not be the first step in the learning process; it should come after a certain amount of mastery of specific language usage has been developed, and after a reasonably large number of language experiences and habits have been acquired. It is difficult to learn the grammar of a language until something is known about the language itself. Grammar should fill out and confirm as well as classify, systematize, and explain the numerous specific language experiences and habits which have previously been acquired.

It is better to learn grammar in the same way as is recommended for the learning of natural sciences, namely, by first observing a number of cases, and speculating, theorizing, and generalizing regarding their relationships afterward. A number of examples or illustrations should be given to precede a rule, and then the rule should be learned as a summarization of these examples. The student should endeavor to formulate his own rules based upon his own observation of the actual examples of language usage, and the rules which he thus derives for himself are likely to be more meaningful and helpful than those which

he finds already formulated in the book and which he simply memorizes ready-made. There is much reason to question the value of learning a rule apart from any previous experience with examples embodying it, and of later trying to apply it to particular cases. In other words, the rule should grow out of examples of actual use rather than precede them.

Learning grammar through reading. The learning of grammar resembles the acquisition of a foreign vocabulary, in that it may be accomplished indirectly and more or less subconsciously through the reading context. It is permissible, in reading, to pass by grammatical forms which are only vaguely understood, with the hope that later reading of similar forms will gradually build up the required understanding and appreciation. If a particular grammatical form is seen again and again in reading, it gradually becomes firmly implanted upon the memory, and tends to survive and function just as naturally as words in the vocabulary function after having been learned from reading the context. Much grammatical knowledge can be acquired in this way through extensive reading in the language, since

the grammatical generalizations gradually build themselves up in the mind unconsciously.

Much of the grammar which is required needs only to be developed to the point of one's being able to recognize grammatical forms in reading, rather than of being able to use them in speaking. There will be times, however, when the context of the sentence will not explain the grammatical point that is involved, and when there is little likelihood that later sentences will clear it up. In such cases, it will be necessary to look the construction up and get its explanation on a more formal basis.

Oral drill as a basis for the mastery of grammar. If the aim is to master grammar in such a way that it will function in practical speech, the study of it should be accomplished by an abundance of oral practice. Grammar knowledge is best acquired upon a foundation of language habits; consequently, the oral practice paves the way for the intellectual or informational aspects of theoretical grammar study. It is also very important as a means of clinching points which are made in the grammar study. Thus, if a rule is learned in the grammar lesson and the process stops there, it remains in the knowledge stage,

but if a period of oral practice is devoted to sentences which embody this rule, the learning process is carried on to the habit-formation stage. The rule is then much more likely to be retained and to be applied to cases which come up in daily speaking.

Paradigms. One of the most common experiences of students in learning foreign grammar is the saying of such paradigms as *amo, amas, amat, amamus, amatis, amant*. Much of this work is pure drudgery, and really contributes little to the mastery of the language. One reason for this fact is that words are associated with each other in this rigmarole which are never associated in daily life. For instance, we never say "I am, you are, he is," outside of a grammar class, and to memorize the forms of a verb in this fashion means forming nervous bonds or connections which are never used, and also failing to acquire the kinds of bonds that are used. Students also frequently go through such rigmaroles without realizing fully the fact that these forms must always be used in connection with other words to make up the sentence.

A plan which seems to be decidedly superior to this mechanical memorization of paradigms

is that which involves learning the different forms in connected sentences. Thus, instead of saying, "I have, you have, he has," one might say, "I have a book in my hand, you have a book in your hand, he has a book in his hand," etc. The sentence is the unit of thought in the language, and should be used as the unit in learning the grammatical forms represented by paradigms. A better method still is that which involves turning the verbs in a given paragraph from present to past tense, or from first person to second or third person, along with the other necessary changes which may be required to preserve consistency. Such drill as is involved in answering questions is also particularly good for learning the various forms of a verb, because it requires different persons and forms naturally rather than in the mechanical and unnatural manner found in the usual paradigms.

Comparing the grammar of different languages. Grammar should be thought of as a universal science, rather than as a thing peculiar to a given language. It is true that there are differences between the grammatical structures of different languages, but these are merely minor variations of the larger and more univer-

sal science of linguistics. When two foreign languages have been studied, the grammar of one may be compared with the grammar of the other, and they usually will be found to coincide rather closely on most points. Having learned a grammatical principle in one language causes it to be noticed and recognized on attacking a second language. Similarly, the grammatical relationships which exist in English may be discovered to apply equally well in the foreign language that is studied.

Much has been said and written regarding the importance of making the study of foreign grammar contribute to the mastery and understanding of English grammar, but frequently the student has overlooked the importance of the point that knowledge of English grammar should be turned to advantage in the acquisition of a foreign language. The student who wishes to achieve the highest success in the mastery of a foreign grammar should prepare for it by studying English grammar, and he should make every effort possible to transfer his knowledge of English grammar to the foreign one as he proceeds with the study. In fact, English grammar is foreign grammar except in some of its minor

aspects, since both are merely varieties of the general and universal science of language.

The use of rules. In times past considerable emphasis was placed upon rules as the principal basis for grammar study. Frequently these were simply memorized verbatim, and were only vaguely understood, if at all. It is very important that the rules be understood and that the logic or reason behind them be thoroughly appreciated. The "why" in grammar is more important than the "what." It is well for the student to paraphrase a rule which he learns from his book, because when he states it in his own words it assumes a meaning and significance for him which the phraseology of the textbook writer is likely to lack. A home-made rule or a home-made statement of a rule, coupled with a genuine understanding, is infinitely better than a nicely phrased statement memorized from the textbook without a due appreciation of its meaning.

Illustrations and examples. A grammatical rule without an example has little value. A common mistake of students is that of assuming that a mastery of the rule will take care of all cases of that rule when they come up in daily

use. This is far from true, however. The application of a rule to specific cases and situations is not nearly so easy as it may appear at first thought. Every rule should be accompanied by numerous examples, and the student should satisfy himself thoroughly as to the way the examples really illustrate the rule. He should make up examples of his own rather than merely memorizing those given in the book. He should frame original sentences to illustrate the rule, as a method of being sure that the rule is being thoroughly understood and appreciated, and also as a means of forming habits of correct application of that rule. The whole point is that a rule is largely an informational or intellectual unit, and that before it becomes a functional unit it must be translated into habit or action of some kind by means of practice.

Exceptions. Practically all foreign languages involve numerous exceptions to the rules of grammar. These exceptions are a constant source of difficulty to the student. It is well for the beginner to disregard most of the smaller variations and special cases until he has mastered the big fundamentals that really count, but sooner or later the exceptions and irregular-

ities will have to be faced, and the method of facing them becomes a matter of some importance.

To attempt to learn all the irregularities and exceptions blindly and mechanically is a difficult task. If possible, they should be learned in relation to their reasons for existence. Most grammatical irregularities can be explained fairly well. For example, many of them are due to phonetic considerations. Many also have their roots in the history of the language. If their origin and development is noted they appear rational and logical rather than as freakish variations from the regular linguistic channels. After these methods have been used in the explanation of such exceptions as can be so explained, there ordinarily will be a residue of irregularities which seem to have no particular reason for existence and which just have to be learned arbitrarily.

Graphical aids and diagramming. The resort to visual methods of learning grammar is very old. Numerous devices have been worked out for this purpose. The study of verbs has frequently been carried on in connection with classification schemes and verb outlines which arrange the

different forms in rows and columns according to their grammatical kinship, thus making for more ready visualization.

Probably the most elaborate scheme of graphical study of grammar is diagramming, in which the entire sentence is analyzed and presented graphically to show the modifiers for the different nouns, and the other grammatical relationships between words. Probably no more effective and thorough method of mastering the science of grammar could be found than such diagramming. The writers of this book would caution against too much use of it, however, since there are other things in a language to be learned besides grammar, and since there is a temptation to put too much stress on the purely formal aspects of grammar, particularly if the efforts along this line seem to turn out successfully.

The selection and use of grammar textbooks. The beginning student should choose a brief and condensed textbook, rather than a complete and elaborate one. The short grammar ordinarily is short because it contains only the most important essentials, and omits that vast quantity of petty rules and exceptions which must neces-

sarily be treated in the larger book. The trouble with the large and complete grammar is that learning it takes too much time away from reading and devotes too much time to the learning of points which are not used often enough in speaking or in reading to be retained after they are learned.

After having made a good beginning in the language, the student may use to advantage a larger and more complete grammar, but even then this book should be used for reference rather than as something to be learned by heart from beginning to end. Most large grammars contain material which is included for the sake of completeness, rather than because it is used frequently. Such materials should be looked up by the student when he has occasion for them, just as a new or unusual word may be looked up in a dictionary or an encyclopedia. This policy is likely to be considerably more fruitful than that of studying the large grammars from beginning to end, giving attention to all items as if they were equally important.

Another point that often is helpful in using grammar texts is that of consulting two or more different grammars upon a given topic, in order

to get supplementary explanations of that topic. Thus, if one book explains subjunctive mood in a way which is difficult to grasp, the next book is likely to approach the topic from a different angle and to use different examples to illustrate the explanations. Thus the two books together make clear what neither one alone succeeded in explaining. This point is particularly important for a student who has to study a foreign language alone, and who cannot rely upon the teacher to clear up points which were left vague by the textbook.

English versus the foreign language as the medium for class discussion about grammar. A problem that confronts the direct-method teacher in dealing with grammar topics is that of whether to carry on the discussion in English or in the foreign language. The weight of the argument seems to favor using English as the medium for such discussions, even though most of the other work is being conducted in the foreign language. The reasons for this are as follows:

(1) The vocabulary required to discuss technical points of grammar is a rather specialized one, and one which seldom functions outside of

the classroom; hence, it is of little permanent worth to the student.

(2) The time and effort required to master the special vocabulary required for grammar discussion is so great that it detracts seriously from the success in mastering the other phases of the language, such as the practical vocabulary of everyday conversation.

(3) The explanations of grammatical principles are not as certain to be understood by all students if they are given in the foreign language as if they are given in the English; hence, the entire value of the discussion may be missed by those students who are most in need of help.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Prepare arguments for a debate on one side of the question: Resolved, that grammar is the most important single factor in the study of a foreign language.
2. Explain the meaning of learning grammar "inductively" and give the reasons for doing so.
3. To what extent do you think it possible to learn grammar through reading a language?
4. How much of the mastery of foreign grammar should be acquired orally?
5. Give the advantages and disadvantages of memorizing such paradigms as *amo*, *amos*, *amat*, etc.

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6. To what extent is grammar a universal science, and to what extent is it different for each particular language?
7. What use should be made of grammar rules?
8. What use should be made of exceptions to grammatical rules?
9. Criticize and evaluate diagramming as a form of grammar study.
10. What kind of grammar textbook should the student use?
11. Give the advantages and disadvantages of conducting grammatical discussions in English as compared with the foreign language.

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CHAPTER XII

SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY OF LATIN

Most of what has been said in previous chapters of this book applies to Latin as well as to the modern languages. There are some points, however, in which the study of the two should differ noticeably because of differences in the nature of the languages and in the purposes for which they are to be studied. The student of Latin should pick out of previous chapters in this book those points which apply to his subject, and should avoid making sweeping applications of points presented if they do not apply to Latin. The present chapter is intended merely to help accomplish this purpose, and to present the special applications of the previous chapters to the peculiar needs and purposes of the Latin student.

Latin a difficult language. At the outset the Latin student should realize that he is undertaking a difficult subject. Latin is a highly inflected language, involving numerous different endings

for different cases, numbers, tenses, moods, etc., and thus there is a considerable burden of memory work in acquiring these fundamentals, which can no more be escaped than can the mastery of the multiplication tables in arithmetic. There is no royal road to the mastery of these phases of Latin. Furthermore, each of these forms must be used correctly, and this again taxes the utmost mental powers of the student. The result is that few students in the ordinary Latin course ever learn the language to such a point that they can speak it or read it rapidly and fluently in the way students read or speak the modern languages. This fact should not be permitted to cause discouragement, however, because the aim or goal in Latin study is not speaking or rapid reading, as it is in modern languages.

A point which the student should keep in mind in connection with the difficulty of Latin study is that it constitutes a challenge to his intelligence. It has been found that the intelligence of Latin students is somewhat higher than the general average for the student body as a whole. Ability to master Latin is, therefore, an indication of high intelligence and an evidence of more than ordinary mental ability.

The direct method of doubtful value in Latin.

Most of what has been said in this book about the direct method and learning to think in the foreign language does not apply to Latin. Reading Latin is more important than speaking it. The development of speaking ability in Latin is of questionable worth because there is no one to whom the language may be spoken, and, therefore, the speaking skills are largely superfluous. Furthermore, speaking Latin is too difficult an art to be acquired by the average student, even if there were some hope of using the ability gained.

The direct method in Latin is questionable on other grounds. Involving, as it does, the omission of the bond or connection between the foreign word and the English word, the direct method robs the study of Latin of its principal contribution to English. The fact that Latin is a dead language, and therefore has little value for direct communication, indicates that the method of study applied to it should be such as to contribute the maximum to the development of English vocabulary and the understanding of English grammar. The direct method is weak in each of these outcomes, and for that reason is

considerably less valuable in Latin than in modern language study.

Making Latin transfer to English. The study of Latin should be less an end in itself than a means of contributing to English. There may be some things which the Latin department can do for the English department better than the English department can do for itself. It is unsafe, however, to assume that Latin will transfer to English automatically. The student must assume a responsibility for making the desired connections. He must consciously attempt to utilize the powers and habits formed in the study of Latin when he is studying in other fields, and he must deliberately strive to discover the elements which are in common between the two languages.

A Latin word and an English word may be so very much alike that the meaning of one helps to explain that of the other, but the similarity or relationship may be entirely overlooked unless an effort is made to discover it. Similarly, a Latin grammar construction may be closely related to a construction in English grammar and yet the relationship may go undetected. In the effort to make Latin transfer to English, the student

should not only purposely try to see the parallels and contrasts between the two, but he also should hunt for the reasons or applications for the connections between them. Merely associating an English word with a Latin word is not nearly so helpful as explaining the reason for the association.

Vocabulary work in Latin. A large vocabulary in Latin would seem to be especially desirable, since most of the words will be related to corresponding English words and thus enrich English vocabulary. The method of acquiring new and unfamiliar words is, therefore, important. The common practice of looking up each word in the vocabulary or dictionary immediately upon encountering it is very unwise. Its meaning should be derived from context, if at all possible, and if not, by comparison with other Latin words which have familiar elements and which suggest the meaning indirectly. Furthermore, the knowledge of English should be utilized in a maximum degree to interpret new Latin words when they are met with. There is much which English can do to contribute to the knowledge of Latin vocabulary, just as Latin can be made to serve English vocabulary.

The study of derivatives. A large majority of English words trace their origins back directly or indirectly to Latin. Vast numbers of prefixes and suffixes in English are simply Latin words that have been carried over bodily to English. There is something to be said, therefore, in favor of making the Latin course largely a study of the sources and origins of English words. This sort of study may be carried on with either English or Latin as the beginning point. Thus we may take up English words, abbreviations, technical terms, mottoes, scientific names, etc., with which we are already familiar, and trace them back to their beginnings in Latin as a means of getting a richer and more vivid understanding of their real significance; or we may take up difficult and unfamiliar English words with which we come in contact in reading, and trace them to their Latin roots as a means of learning them in the first place. Then again we may start with Latin as such, and each time we learn a Latin word we may recall as many English words as possible which are similar to it or have grown out of it.

The common statement that Latin is of great value as a means of explaining English words

is true if the method of study which is used is one which aims at these values. If this is one of the aims in the course, it should be sought after systematically and purposefully instead of being left to chance and to come as a minor by-product.

Translation. Translation is much more important and valuable in the study of Latin than in the study of modern languages, because it is more effective in the improvement of English. Furthermore, translation from Latin to English is more valuable than translation from English to Latin, because it puts the emphasis upon finding the right English word to express the desired shade of thought, and thus gives training in the language which is to be used in daily life rather than in the language which is never used for direct communication. The two principal methods employed in the translating of Latin are:

- (1) Picking out the various parts of the sentence in the order in which they would ordinarily occur in English.

- (2) Interpreting the sentence in Latin order rather than in English order.

The weight of expert opinion seems to favor the latter method as being more likely to result

in a clear understanding and high quality of translation.

Care should be exercised in translating Latin to be sure that the translation makes sense and that it is of sufficiently high quality that it does not become negative practice in English composition. Some of the slovenly "translation English" which is found in some Latin classes could hardly be a means of improving English usage, and would seem to be simply training in bad habits of butchering the English language. The student who wishes to do translation well should not only strive for natural idiomatic English, instead of the literal type of translation, but he should also try to bring out the literary style and rhetorical or poetical flavor of the original Latin version.

Reading Latin for the content. In general, the reading of Latin is done more as an exercise in the art of reading than as a means of securing worth-while information or experiences from what is read. The bright student or the advanced student may well hope to achieve such a mastery of the language as will enable him to get a genuine literary enjoyment from some of the materials which are studied. The average or

ordinary student should expect to reach the point at which he will be able to get a richer meaning and satisfaction out of Latin mottoes on public buildings and other minor forms of Latin usages with which he comes in contact from day to day.

It is somewhat doubtful whether many students will be able to reach the point of extensive reading of Latin books for pure pleasure and pastime, except in the case of a few who specialize in the field to an unusual degree. For the vast majority of students the bulk of Latin literature that is read for enjoyment will have to be read in English translation.

The historical viewpoint in Latin study. Anyone who wishes to become an outstanding student of Latin should prepare for the course by taking work in ancient history, and probably should parallel his study of Latin by further study and reading of the old legends and myths as well as the more established history of the Roman people. An acquaintance with such characters as Romulus, Remus, Jupiter, Venus, and Hercules, will provide a background for the more intelligent interpretation of the material that will be read in the Latin class.

The reading of biographical sketches of great Roman leaders is to be very highly recommended. Also the reading of historical novels and other books which have a setting in ancient Rome will contribute to the background of Roman institutions, and thus enrich the meaning of Latin works which are read. The Roman governmental and social institutions may be compared with those of our own day, and thus contribute to our appreciation of the debt we owe to people who spoke the Latin language.

Studying Latin poetry. The student who pursues Latin far enough to begin the study of Vergil will face the question of methods to be employed in studying poetic literature. Much of what has already been said regarding Latin in general applies to poetry as well as to prose. However, there are a few additional points that apply particularly to poetry, as follows:

(1) The material should be read aloud with due attention to the rhythm, in order that the poetic beauty may be fully appreciated.

(2) The Latin pronunciation of words is preferable to the English pronunciation when studying poetry, because the poet made his verses with the expectation that they would be read

and pronounced in the Latin way. An English pronunciation is likely to sacrifice some of the poetic smoothness and beauty.

(3) The extremes of attention to scanning of poetry should be avoided. The older practice of marking every syllable on the page, and drawing a line between each metrical unit, is of doubtful wisdom. Enough attention should be given to the nature of Latin poetry and to the basic principles of meter to enable the student to read poetry, but the formal study of meter should not be made an end in itself.

(4) The inversion of the order of words in sentences, and other forms of poetic license, are likely to cause some difficulty in regard to comprehension and translation, and the student must expect difficulties of this sort in Latin just as he would expect them in English.

Constructive and creative activities. The Latin language is associated with numerous great masterpieces of sculpture, architecture, engineering, and art. The Roman people have been famous for their remarkable contributions to civilization along these lines. Latin classes in many schools have found it interesting and profitable to devote some of their time to this phase

of Roman life, in addition to the purely linguistic phase. Thus, students have constructed models representing Roman aqueducts, bridges, temples, togas, swords, shields, spears, galleys, etc. Such creative and constructive activities are not only pleasant as forms of recreation, but also profitable in that they help to reconstruct the spirit and grandeur of the days when Rome was at the height of her glory. Representative specimens of this type of work may be placed in the Latin classroom and thus provide a little touch of Roman atmosphere as an encouragement to later classes which are to occupy the room.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. In what major ways should the study of Latin differ from the study of modern languages?
2. What should be the major purpose in studying Latin?
3. What effect does the difficulty of Latin have upon the method of studying it?
4. Evaluate the direct method as it applies to Latin.
5. How can the study of Latin be made to contribute more to the command of English?
6. By what methods should derivatives be studied?
7. Why is the historical approach to Latin particularly important?
8. Compare the value of creative and constructive activities

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in Latin with that of similar activities in the modern languages.

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CHAPTER XIII

LANGUAGE CLUBS AND GAMES

The study of foreign languages need not be confined to the classroom. It may be carried on in the form of recreation as well as in the form of work. The two principal types of such language activities are clubs and games. In the present chapter we shall consider a few suggestions along each of these lines.

I. CLUB ACTIVITIES

The foreign language club. A language club should not necessarily be an organization limited to advanced pupils. There are many activities in which first-year students may engage, with pleasure and profit. The principal distinction between the activities of beginners and those of more advanced students lies in the fact that the beginners will devote their energies more to mastering the language itself, while the more advanced students will use the language as an avenue to enjoyment and to the securing of cultural experiences in somewhat the same way as

members of an English literature group carry on their activities.

It is preferable to use chiefly the foreign language during group meetings, but there will be many times when the use of English will be preferable and necessary. Everything should be kept on a simple plane which can be understood and enjoyed by all the members.

It is advisable to secure for group activities some kind of a published manual which gives the proper form and vocabulary for such parliamentary procedures as calling the meeting to order and putting motions.

There should be a definite program for each meeting, and there should be variety from one meeting to the next. This is best secured by having a particular topic or theme for each meeting, rather than permitting the program each time to cover the entire field.

The program for the year may well be outlined in advance, with the idea of having something different each time, and having the whole proceed in some orderly and systematic way. It may be well occasionally to invite persons from the outside to serve as an audience, in order

to create a greater incentive to put on a good program.

The principal problem in the operation of a language club is that of something to do. The following paragraphs constitute merely a few suggestions and illustrations of group activities which have been found to be both pleasant and profitable.

Parliamentary procedure. It is common for clubs to transact their business according to parliamentary procedure, carried out in the foreign language itself and according to the customs of the country represented. This requires not only a study of the rules of parliamentary procedure which are followed in the foreign country, but also the study of a special vocabulary of words to be used in making motions and transacting business.

Roll call. The device of requiring every member to respond to the roll call by giving a quotation, proverb, or foreign language stunt has been found to be an interesting variation from the more formal type of roll call. If desired, the type of response may be announced beforehand so that all members may be prepared. Thus a

stanza of a poem may be required at one meeting, a riddle at another meeting, and so on.

Geographical studies. A portion of the program may well be devoted to studying about the land and its people, including the interesting places to be seen by the traveler and such incidents or interesting sketches as may portray more clearly the spirit of the country. Lantern slides may be shown and accompanied by lectures, either in English or in the foreign language; talks may be given by persons who have been abroad and have seen interesting places in the foreign country; the club members may set aside a portion of each meeting for such constructive activities as the making of posters and other decorations to lend additional foreign atmosphere and spirit to the club room or classroom. In this connection, there are map games and other map activities in which club members may like to engage.

Celebrating national holidays. A type of program which furnishes variety and arouses keen interest is the celebration of such holidays and special occasions as are naturally celebrated by the people of the foreign country. Each nation has its own special days corresponding to our

Thanksgiving, Washington's Birthday, or Fourth of July, and the rendering of a program in keeping with the spirit of such a day is not only enjoyable but distinctly profitable.

Dialogues and plays. Short and simple dramatic sketches afford good entertainment for the audience and good practice for the players. Students may enact such scenes as ordering a meal at the restaurant, or buying articles in the store, or they may stage short plays which are found in books written for the purpose. The plays that are given should be full of action, so that persons in the audience will be able to get the point even though they may not understand every word that is spoken.

Correspondence with foreign students. The club may establish connections with the members of an English club or class in the foreign country, and exchange letters as a type of club activity. The letters may be written by individuals to individuals and read or reported on at the club meeting. Also the club as a group may plan and send messages to the club in the foreign country. A good way to establish such connections is by writing to the foreign country's ambassador to the United States for assistance, or

by addressing a letter to the professor of English in the foreign university or public school.

Editing an "oral newspaper." A club composed of advanced students may turn a portion of the meeting into a newspaper period in which the news dispatches are presented orally in the language instead of in written form. The entire membership may take part, somewhat as in a current events club, or a special editorial staff may be appointed and each member of the staff be given the task of reporting on a particular type of news. Thus, one editor may be responsible for athletics, another politics, a third foreign affairs, and so on. Such a plan may be carried further, if desired, and may result in a printed or mimeographed foreign language newspaper to be circulated among all the students of that language in the school.

Writing essays and original stories. Members of the club may prepare essays and other forms of creative work as special numbers on the program. Frequently there are essay-writing contests of a national sort sponsored by various foreign language bodies, and involving the granting of prizes for the best productions. One worth-while undertaking of the language club

might be to sponsor try-outs for such prizes. There might be small prizes for the local winners, and the productions of the few best local writers might be sent to the national committee to compete with those from other portions of the country.

Debates. Short debates on non-technical subjects may prove of interest and value. These offer a good incentive to the mastery of the language, since the winning of a debate not only requires a command of vocabulary and the mechanics of the language, but also the ability to use the language in a convincing way.

Identifying objects by the descriptions. One member of the group may be assigned the task of describing a number of different objects in the foreign language, while the members of the club listen and try to identify them. Typical objects for such a purpose may be the language textbook, the teacher, the blackboard, the mayor of the town, etc. The descriptions are assigned numbers, and the members of the club write after each number the name of what is described. The person who succeeds in getting the largest number correct wins the prize, or other form of recognition. This may be varied by dividing into

two sides and counting up the total number of correct answers for each group.

II. GAMES

There are two major types of foreign language games which may be played by clubs and classes. The active type, in which students may move about, run races, etc., will ordinarily be better suited to the purposes of the club than of the regular classroom. The quiet or inactive type, in which students remain seated and do not disturb persons in adjoining rooms, may be in demand for regular language classes and for clubs meeting in the school building during school hours. As in the previous section, we can give only a few illustrations here and leave the reader to locate additional games by consulting books and articles referred to at the end of the chapter.

A relay spelling race. The leader prepares as many slips of paper as there are students in the room, and writes an English word on each. These are divided into two equal piles, one pile for each side in the contest. The piles are placed on opposite ends of a table, face downward. At the signal to go the first student on each side picks

up the first slip on his pile, reads the English word, and writes the foreign word upon the blackboard as quickly as possible. He returns his slip to the table, placing it face up beside the original pile, when the second member of his side is permitted to pick up the second slip and go to the board. The side that finishes first wins. In case a student does not know the foreign word he simply copies the English word on the blackboard. The score is computed in terms of the number of slips on the loser's pile when the winner's last slip has been returned to the table. Deductions are made for the number of words not known, and those which are not spelled correctly.

Baseball spelling or vocabulary match. The well known game of baseball spelling may be carried out with the use of foreign words instead of English words. The batter goes to first base if he can spell or give the foreign equivalent of the word, and is out if he misses it, provided the catcher does not also miss it, and so on. Many varieties of rules are available, patterned after the rules of regular baseball, and the particular plan that is used will be chosen according to local needs and desires. Thus three

outs cause the other side to be called to bat, and a run is made when later players at the bat succeed and advance the player who is already on a base.

A definition match. A list of words may be prepared beforehand and time allowed for studying them. The first word is given to the first student on one side, who attempts to define it in terms of other words in the foreign language. Thus, the word "student" would be defined in some such foreign form as "a boy who goes to school and studies." If the word is missed the other side gets a chance at it, and so on back and forth as in the ordinary spelling match.

Pantomime games. Numbers of interesting games may be played which hinge upon the ability to recognize foreign language words or commands. The familiar game of "Simon Says" is an illustration. For example, the leader says in the foreign language, "Simon says, thumbs up," upon which the students who recognize the meaning turn their thumbs up, and so on with numerous other gestures. Another form of pantomime game is that in which words are given out as in a regular spelling match, and the students respond by some gesture or action which

evidences recognition of the word's meaning, instead of by spelling the word or signifying its meaning in English.

"Unscrambling eggs." A pair of sentences is devised, using vocabulary of equivalent difficulty and grammatical constructions which are equally complex. The words in these sentences are then disarranged and thoroughly scrambled, after which they are written on the blackboard in list form and covered up until the game is ready to begin. A student from each side goes to the board, picks out a word with which to begin the sentence, and writes it down. The next one on his side writes a second word, and so on until the original sentence is restored in proper order. If errors are made they may be corrected by later players, but only one word may be corrected at a time, and all words which were written after the error was made must be erased and replaced one at a time. The game is won by the side which makes the smallest number of trips to the blackboard.

Dance conversations. A program may be arranged similar to that of a dance, in which boys and girls act as partners and carry on foreign language conversations during the period they

act as partners. A definite topic of conversation is announced for each period. The first may be limited to the weather, the next to sports, and so on. Any couple found to be silent or talking English, or talking about another subject than the one announced, must pay a forfeit.

Cross-word puzzles. Although the original fad of solving cross-word puzzles has passed into oblivion, there is still a possibility of pleasure and profit from the solving of such puzzles constructed in the foreign language. The key by which to work may consist of the English equivalents of words or of foreign language suggestions of their meanings.

Completing words. The first pupil on one side writes a single letter on the blackboard, the first one on the other side adds a letter to it, and so on back and forth until the word is completed. The object of the game is to make a word which will end with a letter contributed by one's own side, since the winning side is the one which writes the last letter. The game may continue for twenty or thirty words, or as many as may be desired, and the score may be computed in terms of the number of words finished by each side.

Writing words pertaining to a given subject.

An interesting group contest is that of announcing a given topic, such as farm animals, pieces of furniture, or French authors, and allowing a certain period for writing the names of objects or persons pertaining to the general category given. The winning side is the one which writes the largest number of correct responses. If desired, each error may count off double as a penalty. This not only makes a very interesting game, but is a good test and review of vocabulary.

Making several words out of one. A rather long word may be written on the blackboard, and a limited time allowed for students to write on paper as many smaller and shorter words as they can construct, using only the letters contained in the original long word. The individual or the side having written the largest number of correct words wins.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Give as many reasons as you can for organizing a language club to supplement the regular course in your school.
2. In connection with the various club activities listed in

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this chapter, indicate what you consider to be the principal values and defects of each.

3. To what extent would it be well to insist upon the exclusion of the English language in the club?
4. Formulate what you consider to be a suitable plan for the organization of a language club, including such points as time and place of meetings, and types of activities particularly suited to the group you have in mind.
5. What difficulties or limitations attach to the use of games as means of learning foreign languages?
6. To what extent do you think the resort to games and clubs is likely to become mere play, without much of the feature of really learning the language?
7. Make up or adapt two or three new games for language work not mentioned in this chapter.
8. Under what circumstances or in what setting should language games ordinarily be played?

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